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Subject: Vice Presidential News Clips for Sunday, October 19, 2014

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TO: THE VICE PRESIDENT AND STAFF

DATE: SUNDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2014 -- 7:00 AM EDT

-----TODAY'S EDITION-----

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- + Iraq Fills Out Unity Government, Now Ready To Take On ISIS? (MCT)
- + How To See Vice President Joe Biden In Syracuse (SYPS)
- + Vice President Biden Adds Duluth Stop To Minnesota Visit (BDD)
- + Andrew Cuomo Campaigns Without Traditional Events, While Challenger Rob Astorino Crosses The State (NYDN)
- + Romney Leads Scattered 2016 GOP Field, Clinton Still Dominates The Democratic Race (ABCNEWS)
- + Post-ABC News Poll: Absent Mitt Romney, Who Can Claim The 2016 GOP Banner? (WP)
- + Farnsworth: Virginia Loves Romney (RICHTD)
- + Buzz: Jeb Bush Genuinely Undecided And Genuinely Considering 2016 Presidential Run (TAMPATIM)
- + Emphasis On Early Voting As Quinn, Rauner Run Neck And Neck (CHIST)
- + Schneider, Dold Trade Jabs On Medicare (CHIT)
- + Dold, Schneider Debate 10th District Issues (CHIT)
- + Bill Clinton, In Return Visit, Praises Worcester (WORCEST)
- + Nunn, Biden Volunteer At Hands On Atlanta Day (MYAJC)
- + Jill Biden Volunteers With Georgia Senate Candidate (HILL)
- + Thousands Volunteer For Hands On Atlanta Day (WXIATV)
- + Obama Holds Saturday Night Meeting On Ebola (USAT)
- + Officials Brief Obama On Ebola Response (HILL)
- + President Obama: Americans Shouldn't 'Give In To Hysteria' On Ebola (NOTP)

- + Ebola 'Czar' Knows Washington, But Not Medicine (AP)
- + Loop Guidance For New Ebola Czar Ron Klain (WP)
- + Hillary To Hit Boston On Friday To Stump For Coakley (BOSH)
- + Biden's Son Won't Have Conn. Law License Reviewed After Positive Cocaine Test (NLDAY)

NEW YORK TIMES AND WASHINGTON POST OP-EDS:

- + A Rate Cap For All Consumer Loans (NYT)
- + From Jimmy Carter, A Rebuke To Egypt (NYT)
- + The House's Ethics Lesson For The Senate (NYT)
- + The Ebola Scare (NYT)
- + The Virus Of Cynicism (NYT)
- + An Affair To Remember, Differently (NYT)
- + As Ebola Rages In Africa, The International Response Continues To Lag (WP)
- + The Post Endorses Muriel Bowser For D.C. Mayor (WP)
- + Standardized Tests Must Measure Up (WP)
- + A Campaign With No Answers (WP)
- + In Colorado, Overheated Rhetoric From 'Mark Uterus' (WP)
- + The Nasty Politicization Of Ebola (WP)
- + The West Is Paying Dearly For Cozying Up To Russia Over 25 Years (WP)
- + Islamic State's Evil Highlights The Compassion Of Its Victims (WP)
- + Liberty, Equality Aren't Mutually Exclusive (WP)

WILMINGTON NEWS JOURNAL STORIES:

- + Downstate Delaware's Hidden Heroin Epidemic (WILNJ)
- + Delaware Ramps Up Ebola Preparations (WILNJ)

WILMINGTON NEWS JOURNAL EDITORIALS:

- + Don't Wait For Heroin-addiction Solutions (WILNJ)
 - + Legal Pot? Is That What We Really Want? (WILNJ)
 - + In Overcoming Addiction, There Are No Shortcuts (WILNJ)
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BIDEN IN THE NEWS:

IRAQ FILLS OUT UNITY GOVERNMENT, NOW READY TO TAKE ON ISIS? (MCT)

By Susannah George

McClatchy, October 18, 2014

BAGHDAD Iraq's parliament has approved a series of key ministers after a month of wrangling, completing the formation of a unity government as the country's military and security forces struggle to push back the Islamic State.

Publicly, most Iraqi parliamentarians called the move a step in the right direction, but others dismissed the appointments as politically motivated and the appointees themselves as inexperienced.

"I think it's a good sign" says Mowaffak al-Rubaie, a longtime Shia statesman currently representing Baghdad in Parliament and a former security advisor to former Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki.

"Now that Mr. Abadi has completed his cabinet, the government can function," Rubaie explained. Shortly after being sworn in as Prime Minister in September, Haider al-Abadi's initial nominations to the ministries of the Interior and Defense were rejected. The ensuing political deadlock fueled concerns that Abadi would be unable to bring about political reconciliation between Iraq's Sunnis and Shia, a key requirement for U.S. aid to the country's floundering military in the fight against the Islamic State.

Sunni distrust of Maliki's Shia dominated government and his increasingly sectarian policies were seen as a one of the principal factors leading to the rise of the Islamic State in Iraq.

U.S. officials lauded the completion of the cabinet as critical to building a durable coalition to

defeat the Islamic State.

"Significantly, this is the first time since 2010 that Iraq has had a full cabinet with security ministers confirmed by the Iraqi parliament," State Department spokeswoman Jen Psaki said.

Vice President Joe Biden phoned Abadi and discussed "the work ahead, including steps to rebuild Iraq's security forces and enlist all of Iraq's communities in the fight against the Islamic State," the White House said.

The Ministry of Interior went to Mohammed Salem al-Ghabban, a Shiite lawmaker with the controversial Badr Organization. Abadi's previous nominee for the post was Hadi al-Amiri, the head of Badr and the former minister of transport.

In an interview shortly after the nominations were announced, Al-Amiri said he was satisfied with the choice of al-Ghabban as Minister of Interior.

"He was my choice," Amiri said. "I told Abadi from day one it didn't have to be me, it could be anyone from Badr."

The Badr Organization's armed wing has been accused of an array of human rights abuses including sectarian killings.

A Sunni parliamentarian from Mosul, Khaled al-Obeidi, will now head up the Ministry of Defense. The choice of a politician from Mosul is a symbolically important move as the city was the first major Iraqi metropolis to fall under the control of the Islamic State when militants swept across northern Iraq in June.

"I see both appointments as weak," said one senior Iraqi politician from a powerful Shia bloc in parliament who requested anonymity in order to speak freely. "They're young, inexperienced and not that bright." The politician said those character traits were particularly concerning as the two positions are responsible for the nation's security forces at a time when the country is battling a radical insurgency.

As for what the appointments say about the future of Abadi's Prime Ministership, the senior politician described it as "not promising."

Iraq's parliament also approved a tourism minister, a women's affairs minister and a minister of immigration and displacement. Two Kurdish ministers were also sworn in, a move former Kurdish parliamentarian Mahmoud Othman described as important because it could signal more cooperation between Iraq's Kurdish region and the central government in Baghdad.

"When they took that oath that means they are now part of this government and so now I think they should start serious talks," Othman said in reference to ongoing budget disagreements between the Kurdistan Regional Government and Baghdad.

But, he relented, ultimately he saw all of Saturday's appointments as pure politics. "The qualification comes second," he said. "They are all capable of doing the job, but I don't think they will do it well."

HOW TO SEE VICE PRESIDENT JOE BIDEN IN SYRACUSE (SYPS)

By Mark Weiner

Syracuse (NY) Post-Standard, October 18, 2014

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Vice President Joe Biden's visit to Syracuse on Monday for a campaign rally with U.S. Rep. Dan Maffei will be open to the public with no tickets required, according to the Maffei campaign.

Biden will address supporters for Maffei, D-Syracuse, at noon Monday inside an airplane hangar at Syracuse Hancock International Airport.

Biden and Maffei are expected to deliver remarks about strengthening the middle class at Syracuse Landmark Aviation Hangar #113, 113 Tuskegee Road in Mattydale.

Signs and volunteers will direct visitors to free parking near the terminal on the south side of the airport, according to the Maffei campaign.

Previous Maffei campaign rallies at the same hangar in 2010 and 2012 with former President Bill Clinton attracted crowds of 800 to 1,000 people.

Biden, a 1968 graduate of Syracuse University's law school, plans to make one other stop in New York state on Monday. In the morning, he is scheduled to appear with New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo in New York City for an event to discuss infrastructure modernization.

Biden has been on the campaign trail for several weeks, helping Democrats facing tough battles in midterm elections. Political analysts and polls show Maffei is vulnerable in his re-election

campaign against Republican John Katko of Camillus.

Several polls have shown Katko moving within striking distance of Maffei, trailing by 3 to 8 percentage points.

VICE PRESIDENT BIDEN ADDS DULUTH STOP TO MINNESOTA VISIT (BDD)

Brainerd (MN) Daily Dispatch, October 18, 2014

WASHINGTON - Vice President Joe Biden's Minnesota trip next week will include a stop in Duluth, the White House said Friday.

Biden will be in Duluth for an event on domestic violence issues on Thursday, his press office confirmed. Details of the event were not immediately announced.

Also Thursday, he is expected to travel to Hibbing to stump for Democratic U.S. Rep. Rick Nolan, who is locked in a tight battle for re-election against Republican challenger Stewart Mills and Green Party candidate Skip Sandman.

No further details on the time or location of the Hibbing rally had been released as of late Friday.

ANDREW CUOMO CAMPAIGNS WITHOUT TRADITIONAL EVENTS, WHILE CHALLENGER ROB ASTORINO CROSSES THE STATE (NYDN)

By Glenn Blain, Kenneth Lovett

New York Daily News, October 19, 2014

ALBANY - It's the noncampaign campaign.

While underdog Republican Rob Astorino criss-crosses the state in a desperate hunt for votes, Gov. Cuomo is running out the clock until Election Day - a Rose Garden strategy on steroids. Take last week for example. Cuomo spent much of it promoting his new memoir. That included a flurry of national media sitdowns, interviews with local TV stations limited to the book, a book-signing, and a visit to "The Late Show" reading a David Letterman Top 10 list.

Cuomo also held a press briefing on state preparations for Ebola and staged an in-and-out, 24-hour visit to Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic in a nod to New York's Hispanic voters. The trip was his third overseas dash in two months - he also swept into Israel and Afghanistan - after almost never leaving New York in 3 1/2 years. As for traditional campaign-style events, there was none, nor did he mention Astorino by name.

This week will open with more of the same. On Monday, Cuomo appears in Queens with Vice President Biden to "discuss infrastructure modernization."

While Cuomo touted his book and left the state, Astorino descended on the South Bronx, where he danced with Hispanic seniors; delivered a speech calling for term limits; celebrated the Jewish holiday Sukkot in Brooklyn; stumped in Rochester, Westchester County and Long Island; and gave a whirlwind of radio interviews.

John Minchillo/AP

While Cuomo touted his book and left the state, Astorino (pictured) descended on the South Bronx, where he danced with Hispanic seniors; delivered a speech calling for term limits; celebrated the Jewish holiday Sukkot in Brooklyn; stumped in Rochester, Westchester County and Long Island; and gave a whirlwind of radio interviews.

At nearly every turn, he called Cuomo a coward for not agreeing to one-on-one televised debates. "He's the imperial governor who wants nothing to do with the average person and it shows," Astorino said.

He added that when he ran for reelection in 2013 as Westchester County executive, he campaigned heavily and debated his Democratic opponent five times despite leading in the polls. "It's incumbent upon the incumbent to do that; otherwise, he loses touch with those he represents," Astorino said.

Cuomo has held a few traditional campaign events in recent weeks - notably two Saturday bus tours highlighting women's issues, and a Sunday visit to black churches.

"The governor has been campaigning with voters every weekend while doing his day job," said campaign spokesman Matt Wing. With a huge money advantage and a big lead, Cuomo signaled early on he would not conduct a traditional press-the-flesh campaign.

CBS

Cuomo also made a visit to 'The Late Show' reading a David Letterman Top 10 list.

Faced with a Democratic primary challenge from little-known Fordham law professor Zephyr

Teachout, Cuomo did virtually no campaigning until the last week of the race. He refused to debate Teachout.

Unlike his schedule over the last month, which has been filled with government events and, last week, appearances for his book, Cuomo spent many days during the primary with no public events at all.

"It seems to be a blend of entitlement and fear," Teachout said.

Perhaps. But no political experts or analysts interviewed by the Daily News faulted Cuomo's approach, even while admitting it deprives the public of a true debate on issues facing the state.

"This is a 'Seinfeld' version of the governor's campaign. It is a campaign about nothing," former Assemblyman Richard Brodsky (D-Westchester) said. But, it's a "pretty sound strategy."

ROMNEY LEADS SCATTERED 2016 GOP FIELD, CLINTON STILL DOMINATES THE DEMOCRATIC RACE (ABCNEWS)

ABC News, October 19, 2014

Hillary Clinton continues to hold a commanding lead in the potential Democratic field for president in 2016, while the GOP frontrunner in the latest ABC News/Washington Post poll is a familiar figure - but one not favored by eight in 10 potential Republican voters.

That would be Mitt Romney, supported for the GOP nomination by 21 percent of Republicans and Republican-leaning independents. That's double the support of his closest potential rival, but it also leaves 79 percent who prefer one of 13 other possible candidates tested, or none of them. When Romney is excluded from the race, his supporters scatter, adding no clarity to the GOP free-for-all. In that scenario former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush, former Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee and Kentucky Sen. Rand Paul have 12 or 13 percent support from leaned Republicans who are registered to vote. All others have support in the single digits.

Were Romney to run again, he'd likely face some of the same challenges that dragged out the 2012 GOP contest. He's supported by only half as many "strong" conservatives as those who are "somewhat" conservative, 15 vs. 30 percent in this poll, produced for ABC by Langer Research Associates.

Huckabee, for his part, does somewhat better with Republican-leaning independents than with mainline Republicans, a potential problem in closed primaries. He also does better with women than with men; that's reversed for Paul.

DEMS - Clinton continues to dominate on the Democratic side, with 64 percent support. Still, there are some gaps in her support: It's 54 percent among men vs. 70 percent of women and 55 percent among those younger than 50 vs. 72 percent among those 50 and older. And she gets less support from Democratic-leaning independents, 53 percent, than from mainline Democrats, 69 percent.

Vice President Joe Biden and Sen. Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts have 13 and 11 percent support, respectively. Biden does better among those under 50, those with less education and nonwhites; Warren, among college graduates and whites.

It's early days for all this, of course; the 2016 election is two years away. But after the midterms just two weeks off, it'll be the next item on the dance card.

METHODOLOGY - This ABC News/Washington Post poll was conducted by telephone Oct. 9-12, 2014, in English and Spanish, among a random national sample of 1,006 adults, including landline and cell-phone-only respondents. Results among the 871 registered voters interviewed have a margin of sampling error of 4 points, including design effect.

The survey was produced for ABC News by Langer Research Associates of New York, N.Y., with sampling, data collection and tabulation by Abt-SRBI of New York, N.Y.

POST-ABC NEWS POLL: ABSENT MITT ROMNEY, WHO CAN CLAIM THE 2016 GOP BANNER? (WP)

By Dan Balz

Washington Post, October 19, 2014

When Mitt Romney managed to get about 25 percent support in the early polls against his 2012 Republican rivals, everyone asked, "What's wrong with Mitt?" He was, after all, the presumed front-runner. Today, with a new Washington Post-ABC News poll showing something similar about 2016, the question could be, "What's wrong with all the others?"

The survey tested Romney against the prospective field of 2016 GOP presidential candidates. Ann Romney told Maeve Reston of the Los Angeles Times last week that she and the Romneys' sons are "done, done, done" with presidential politics after two failed campaigns. But for now, the former Massachusetts governor and 2012 nominee is at the top of the heap in the eyes of rank-and-file Republicans.

The Post-ABC poll found that 21 percent of Republicans or Republican-leaning independents say they favor the Romney as their 2016 nominee. That was almost double the 11 percent who named the person in second place, former Florida governor Jeb Bush.

Romney benefits as much or more from the fact that no one among the likely candidates has yet filled the vacuum he left behind. That he enjoys top billing among prospective 2016 GOP candidates says something about Romney but much more about the others in the unsettled field. Romney enjoys a warm glow today in part because of what's happened to President Obama since 2012. Remembered are attributes or statements that look better in retrospect than they did at the time. Forgotten or dismissed are some of the mistakes Romney made in that campaign, from "self-deportation" to "47 percent."

With the assumption that Romney would not run again, the 2016 race always was going to look different than past Republican nominating contests. For the first time in a long time, there is neither an heir apparent (George H.W. Bush in 1988, Bob Dole in 1996, John McCain in 2008, Romney in 2012) nor a dominant first-time candidate (George W. Bush in 2000).

Republicans assumed their 2016 field collectively would be far stronger than the group who competed in 2012, which is now regarded as one of the weakest in modern times. That could still turn out to be the case, but so far no one has begun to break from the pack.

The Post-ABC poll highlights this. Taking Mitt and Ann Romney at their word that a third campaign is not in their future, this race is as wide open as it could be, at least in terms of early popular support.

Absent Romney, Jeb Bush leads with a mere 15 percent, Sen. Rand Paul (Ky.) is second at 12 percent, and former Arkansas governor Mike Huckabee is third at 11 percent - all within the five-point error margin.

After that, in descending order, are the single-digit candidates, all bunched between 8 and 6 percent: Rep. Paul Ryan (Wis.), Sen. Marco Rubio (Fla.), New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie, Ben Carson and Texas Gov. Rick Perry. Coming in below 5 percent are Sen. Ted Cruz (Tex.), former senator Rick Santorum (Pa.), Louisiana Gov. Bobby Jindal, Ohio Gov. John Kasich and, at 1 percent, Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker.

Bush's support is fairly even through various demographic and economic groups. Huckabee is stronger among women than men, while Rand Paul is the opposite. Paul Ryan does better with Republicans who have college degrees or incomes over \$50,000 than he does with those without degrees and making less.

On perhaps the most important divide within the GOP, Bush does significantly better among Republicans who say they do not support the tea party, as befits his establishment pedigree. Huckabee and Paul do better with the much larger group of Republicans who say they back the tea party movement.

Any analysis of 2016 polls comes with the obvious caution: Given the number of candidates and the absence of a clear front-runner, these early measures are far from predictive. Beyond that, they can't measure the fundraising wherewithal or the political staying power each candidate could bring to a campaign. Because they are national surveys, they don't take into account strengths or weaknesses in the early states that winnow the field. Most significantly, they don't measure the quality of campaigning skills.

Examples abound from past campaigns to underscore those caveats.

Huckabee won the Iowa caucuses in 2008, but his campaign was always crippled by lack of money. Hillary Rodham Clinton had great national numbers in 2007 but always looked vulnerable in polls of Iowa Democrats. Perry is Exhibit A of the difference between how a candidate looks on paper and on the campaign trail.

If he decides to run, Bush should be able to raise the money needed, but he is at odds with his party's base on some key issues, and according to a recent Des Moines Register-Bloomberg Politics poll of Iowa Republicans, he comes in with just 4 percent support in the state whose caucuses kick off the process. The biggest question mark is whether he will even seek the

nomination.

Others in the prospective field have even bigger question marks behind their names. Simply put, how many of the prospective candidates look better as this midterm election nears its conclusion than they did in the months right after the 2012 campaign? Readers can draw their own conclusions based on what they've seen so far.

On the Democratic side, there are no surprises. It's still Clinton vs. all others.

In the latest survey, 65 percent of Democrats and Democratic-leaning independents say they favor the former senator and secretary of state for the nomination. Vice President Biden is second at 13 percent, with Sen. Elizabeth Warren (Mass.), who has said repeatedly she has no intention of running, at 10 percent.

Although Clinton's support is strong through all demographic and economic groups, there are some variations of note. She enjoys far more support among women than men and stronger support among Democrats 50 or older rather than among those younger.

Clinton also wins demonstrably more support among white Christians than among those who say they have no religion. And she does better with white Democrats who do not have a college degree than with those who do. In that way, her profile differs from that of Obama, who has generally done better with voters who have college degrees and post-graduate degrees than those without.

That could prove significant in a general election. If that profile was to translate into her capturing a higher share of the white vote in a general election than Obama managed in 2012 while retaining the Obama coalition of minorities and well-educated whites, Republicans would be in trouble, unless they can offset it by doing better among non-white voters. First, however, they will have to find a candidate.

FARNSWORTH: VIRGINIA LOVES ROMNEY (RICHTD)

By Stephen J. Farnsworth

Richmond (VA) Times-Dispatch, October 19, 2014

If Mitt Romney, the 2012 Republican presidential nominee, chooses to run for president again in 2016, he would be quite welcome in Virginia - more welcome, in fact, than many potential Republican candidates already designing their upcoming campaigns.

If Mitt Romney, the 2012 Republican presidential nominee, chooses to run for president again in 2016, he would be quite welcome in Virginia - more welcome, in fact, than many potential Republican candidates already designing their upcoming campaigns.

Indeed, in a hypothetical rematch this fall with President Barack Obama, a new statewide poll by the University of Mary Washington shows that the former Massachusetts governor would likely win the Old Dominion's Electoral College votes. Obama won the state two years ago by 4 percentage points, but the new survey shows a 2-point margin favoring Romney among registered voters. In many ways, Virginia's Romney love should not be surprising. He spent a lot of time in the state during the 2012 general election campaign, and he coasted to victory in the Virginia GOP primary earlier that year. In addition, many Virginians favor politicians who have spent time in the private sector.

Romney's strengths are particularly notable given the other moderate Republicans with national profiles who also might be contemplating a 2016 presidential campaign. The UMW statewide survey of 1,000 adult residents conducted Oct. 1-6 found that 19 percent listed Romney as their favorite for the 2016 GOP nomination, as compared to 14 percent supporting New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie, 10 percent for former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush, and 8 percent for Sen. Rand Paul of Kentucky. U.S. Rep. Paul Ryan of Wisconsin, Romney's 2012 vice presidential running mate, and Sen. Marco Rubio of Florida were both at 5 percent in the survey and Sen. Ted Cruz of Texas came in at 4 percent.

The top rankings in the survey for Romney, Christie and Bush - all relatively moderate voices within the GOP - might spell bad news for conservative Republicans, many of whom supported Romney in 2012 and Sen. John McCain of Arizona in 2008 after more conservative presidential candidates dropped out. After the votes were counted in 2012, many conservatives insisted a more ideologically oriented campaign against Democrats would have been more successful than Romney's.

But the survey results suggest good news for the party's pragmatists: Conservative Republicans in

Virginia nominated three of their own at a nomination convention last year and went on to lose all three statewide contests for the first time in more than 20 years.

Romney also is well-positioned as a compromise choice in a party divided among fiscal, religious and national security conservatives. He also was the second choice of 16 percent of Virginians surveyed, as compared to 8 percent who named Christie and 7 percent each selecting Bush, Paul and Ryan as their alternate preferences for the GOP nomination. More than one-third (35 percent) of those surveyed listed the former Massachusetts governor as their first or second choice, as compared to 22 percent who listed Christie as a top or second pick. Bush was third, with 17 percent of those surveyed naming him their first or second choice.

For the 2016 Democratic nomination, Hillary Clinton had a greater edge in Virginia over her party rivals in the survey than Romney did over his. Clinton had the support of 33 percent, as compared to 14 percent favoring Sen. Mark Warner of Virginia, who placed second, and 7 percent supporting Vice President Joe Biden, who ranked third in the poll.

The strength of Romney's appeal in Virginia has profound national implications. The Old Dominion is not just a "purple" state in its politics; it is also far more like America than are Iowa and New Hampshire, the first caucus and primary states. With its liberal Northern Virginia, its evangelical Southside, its agricultural heartland in the Shenandoah Valley and its industrial urban core in Hampton Roads, Republicans around the nation should take Virginia's nomination preferences very seriously.

Stephen J. Farnsworth is professor of political science and director of the Center for Leadership and Media Studies at the University of Mary Washington. Contact him at sfarnswo@umw.edu.

BUZZ: JEB BUSH GENUINELY UNDECIDED AND GENUINELY CONSIDERING 2016 PRESIDENTIAL RUN (TAMPATIM)

By Adam C. Smith

Tampa Bay (FL) Times, October 19, 2014

Political junkies in Florida don't have to worry about the drama ending Nov. 4, because once the governor's race wraps up, another huge political question emerges: Will Jeb run in 2016?

Former Gov. Jeb Bush has said he will make up his mind by year's end and most signs suggest he is both genuinely undecided and genuinely considering it. Meanwhile, U.S. Sen. Marco Rubio appears more likely to run, though Bush's candidacy would seriously crimp his fundraising and political network.

The latest Tampa Bay Times/Bay News 9/UF Bob Graham Center Poll underscores how much Bush overshadows Rubio, at least among Florida voters who presumably know them better than any other Republicans.

Among potential Republican presidential contenders, here's how support among likely Florida voters broke down: 35 percent said they would support Bush; 21 percent Rubio; 13 percent "someone else"; 10 percent Kentucky Sen. Rand Paul; 7 percent New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie; and 6 percent Texas Gov. Rick Perry. Among just Republicans, Bush drew 36 percent support, followed by Rubio with 24 percent. Among Democrats, Bush had 34 percent support, followed by "someone else" with 17 percent; and Rubio with 13 percent.

Bush may be the GOP frontrunner in Florida, but even here he is no Hillary Clinton. Asked about likely Democratic presidential contenders, 67 percent said they would choose Clinton (including 69 percent of Democrats, 53 percent of Republicans and 64 percent of independents).

Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren drew support from 12 percent of likely voters (10 percent from Democrats), followed by Vice President Joe Biden with 7 percent.

The telephone survey of 781 registered Florida voters - all likely to vote in the November election - was conducted Oct. 7-12 for the Tampa Bay Times, Bay News 9 and News 13 of Orlando by the University of Florida's Bob Graham Center for Public Service and Bureau of Economic and Business Research. The poll, which included respondents using land lines and cellphones, has a margin of error of plus or minus 3.2 percentage points.

Bush's considerations

Two other Bush tidbits that could influence his presidential decisionmaking:

- A new Des Moines Register/Bloomberg Politics poll of likely voters in all-important Iowa found that Bush trailed Clinton by 7 percentage points, and that 32 percent of Iowans had a favorable view of the former Florida governor and 38 percent an unfavorable view.

- His wife, Columba, has been rumored to be wary of a presidential campaign, and in an interview with the Associated Press in Texas he addressed that as well as his mother's public skepticism about another Bush running for president:

"As it relates to my mom, my mom's been around the track ... she just believes that it's something that she doesn't want my family to go through, although she's changed her mind on that. So I'm marking her down to 'neutral, trending in a different direction' than she was," Bush said. "My wife is supportive, but that doesn't mean that I don't understand the challenges that this brings. This is ultimately my decision, with as much consideration as I can to take into account the people that I really love."

Comedy wins

Stephen Colbert professes to be rooting for "Florida governor and python on Ecstasy Rick Scott," to win a second term, but on his show last week Colbert on Comedy Central said he understood why Crist insisted on bringing a fan to their televised debate.

"Based on that skin tone, I'd say his core temperature is 450 degrees. But why should Crist get to cool himself with a fan but Scott isn't allowed to control his temperature by lying on a chilled rock?" Jon Stewart on The Daily Show went with more anatomically oriented humor in an eight-minute segment dubbed, "The Last Perspiration of Crist."

Fangate also dropped in on Late Show With David Letterman on CBS. Mentioning the ban on the fan in the debate, Letterman dedicated his Top 10 list to lesser known gubernatorial debate rules.

"We have some even more obscure than the fan rule," Letterman said.

They included: 9) In lieu of rebuttal, candidates may perform guitar solos; 6) Shirts must remain on for weigh-in; 4) Maximum three time outs for self-tanning application; 2) No slapping, no tickling; 1) Last candidate to take hands off podium wins.

Crisafulli's picks

Incoming House Speaker Steve Crisafulli, R-Merritt Island, has made his picks for the top leadership positions.

Rep. Matt Hudson, R-Naples, will serve as speaker pro tempore. Rep. Dana Young, R-Tampa, will be House majority leader. Rep. Ritch Workman, R-Melbourne, will be the Rules and Calendar chairman. Rep. Richard Corcoran, R-Trinity, will oversee the budget committee. (All are expected to win re-election in November, but stranger things have happened.)

Alex Leary, Michael Van Sickler and Kathleen McGrory contributed to this week's Buzz.

EMPHASIS ON EARLY VOTING AS QUINN, RAUNER RUN NECK AND NECK (CHIST)

By Lynn Sweet

Chicago Sun-Times, October 18, 2014

WASHINGTON - President Barack Obama, Vice President Joe Biden and former President Bill Clinton all hit the Chicago area in the coming days to turn out the Democratic base vote for Gov. Pat Quinn, as early voting starts Monday in Illinois.

While there are many national stories about Obama being a drag on candidates, that's not the case in adopted homestate Illinois. Just in October, Obama will have been in Chicago twice; first lady Michelle once; Biden once, and, coming up Oct. 26, Dr. Jill Biden headlines a Democratic fundraiser in Chicago.

The White House would dispatch Bo and Sunny, the popular Obama Portuguese Water dogs, to Illinois if they could help.

Election Day, Nov. 4, is the last but by far not the only chance to vote, with enormous emphasis by Illinois Democrats and Republicans on voting by mail and the early vote, which runs through Nov.

2.

The campaigns of Quinn and GOP nominee Bruce Rauner are investing heavily in data analytics to microtarget likely voters - most specifically folks who usually sit out midterms - to inform field organizers where to send traditional grass-roots door knockers, phone calls and direct-mail pieces. These efforts also will boost down-ticket candidates and could be crucial in some highly contested Illinois House battles, especially in the north suburban 10th congressional district.

Here are nine things to know about early voting in Illinois:

- * The most important element of partisan get-out-the-vote drives, aka GOTV, is to make sure you snare your voter and not unwittingly give a boost to your rival.

After all, this is an election, not a civics class.

* Quinn needs a massive African-American turnout to beat Rauner (a poll released Friday shows a statistical dead heat), and that's why the Obama rally on Sunday night will be at the 6,000-seat Chicago State University Jones Convocation Center, 9501 S. King Drive. Obama also headlines a \$10,000-a-person fundraiser dinner Monday in Chicago for the Democratic National Committee.

* Bill Clinton hits Chicago on Tuesday to bolster Quinn. Clinton, the "Explainer-in-Chief," is delivering a speech at Wheatland Tube, 4435 S. Western, where will make the case that Quinn has improved the Illinois economy and that unemployment has dropped on his watch. Hundreds of labor and business leaders have been invited to the event. At the 2012 Democratic convention, Clinton made the case for Obama in clearer, simpler terms than any other speaker, including the president.

* Biden is leading an early vote rally Wednesday for Quinn, Sen. Dick Durbin, D-Ill., and Rep. Brad Schneider, D-Ill., at the Sullivan Community Center, 635 N. Aspen, in Vernon Hills - in the 10th district, where Schneider is in a tight race with former Rep. Bob Dold, R-Ill.

* In Illinois, Democrats are running a coordinated GOTV drive led by Durbin, Quinn and Democratic Party of Illinois Chairman Michael Madigan, speaker of the Illinois House. The Republican Illinois GOTV operation is led and heavily bankrolled by the Rauner campaign.

* Meanwhile next week, Rauner will stump with popular mainstream Illinois Republicans - Sen. Mark Kirk, R-Ill., Comptroller Judy Baar Topinka and Rep. Peter Roskam, R-Ill.

* Who Rauner won't be with next week: Republican 2016 presidential contenders Sen. Ted Cruz, R-Texas, in Chicago on Wednesday and Sen. Rand Paul, R-Ky., in the city on Monday. Even though Paul is on the cover of Time this week, appearing anywhere with the tea party-aligned Cruz or Paul, with his eclectic views, could hurt Rauner with the independent and Democratic swing voters he seeks.

* Democrats are also getting a heavy turnout assist from Democratic-allied unions bankrolling a drive to approve a ballot question about raising the minimum wage in Illinois. That's a turnout tool. The "Raise Illinois" Coalition plans to knock on 300,000 doors emphasizing early voting starting on Saturday.

* Why the emphasis on early voting? Campaigns go to a lot of trouble to identify their likely voters, and they want to bank them early in order to not be at the mercy of variables, such as weather. Also, campaign workers keep track of early voters, so once the ballot is cast, they don't have to waste any more effort on that person.

SCHNEIDER, DOLD TRADE JABS ON MEDICARE (CHIT)

By Gregory Trotter

Chicago Tribune, October 18, 2014

A debate Saturday between the rivals in the north suburban 10th Congressional District - Rep. Brad Schneider, the first-term Democrat, and GOP challenger Bob Dold - grew tense on the topic of Medicare.

Dold assailed Schneider as a partisan leader who's done little good for 10th District voters.

"You said you wouldn't cut a single penny from Medicare. You have gutted the program by over \$700 billion," Dold said to Schneider. "After you've misled the voters this many times, how can they expect to trust anything that you say?"

What followed was chippy back-and-forth over the intersection of the Affordable Care Act, Medicare and past budgets proposed by Rep. Paul Ryan, R-Wis., that Dold supported when he was in Congress. In the exchange, both politicians slung partisan Medicare talking points that have been largely debunked by fact-checking organizations in recent years.

The debate was sponsored by the League of Women Voters of Illinois and ABC 7 and will be televised on that channel at 1 p.m. Sunday.

For most of the debate, the candidates stuck to their campaign messaging. Dold stressed his willingness to break from party lines and represent the district in a bipartisan fashion; Schneider said Dold's past record was dependably right-wing.

"Only one of us has voted to cut Medicare and that's you," Schneider said. "You voted for a Ryan plan, and you voted for it twice, and the Ryan plan ends the Medicare guarantee."

In his rebuttal, Dold pointed out that the claim - "Republicans voted to end Medicare"; - was PolitiFact's "Lie of the Year" in 2011. PolitiFact is a nonpartisan fact-checking website associated with the Tampa Bay Times.

"What's interesting is he's running a campaign and he's trying to spout off things because he has no record to run on, and therefore wants to poke holes at me," Dold said.

Dold reiterate the claim that Schneider, by voting in support of the Affordable Care Act, voted to cut \$700 billion from Medicare.

That claim has also been repeatedly targeted by fact-checking groups that have made the distinction that \$716 billion will be reduced in future Medicare spending over a period of 10 years - a reduction of the spending growth rate, not a cut in current spending, according to FactCheck.org, a website run by the Annenberg Public Policy Center of the University of Pennsylvania.

Schneider unseated former Rep. Dold in 2012, winning by slightly more than one percentage point. This rematch has been closely watched and is considered a tossup by many observers.

Vice President Joe Biden is coming to the Chicago area Wednesday for a political rally in Vernon Hills in support of Schneider, U.S. Sen. Dick Durbin and Paul Vallas, the Democratic candidate for Illinois lieutenant governor.

DOLD, SCHNEIDER DEBATE 10TH DISTRICT ISSUES (CHIT)

By Gregory Trotter

Chicago Tribune, October 18, 2014

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BILL CLINTON, IN RETURN VISIT, PRAISES WORCESTER (WORCEST)

By Brad Petrishan

Worcester (MA) Telegram & Gazette, October 18, 2014

WORCESTER - Once again effusive in his praise for the city he's visited often, former President Bill Clinton on Thursday joined high-level state Democrats in painting this year's gubernatorial race as one pitting a principled, compassionate progressive against a prop for the Republican elite.

"You've got a model most of this country and most of the world would die to have," the 42nd

president said of Massachusetts. "Don't mess it up."

As a crowd of more than 800 listened with rapt attention in Clark University's Atwood Hall, Mr. Clinton delivered the case for Martha M. Coakley in an often conversational tone, remarking it was more appropriate for a city he admires than "some whoop-dee-doo speech."

"I love this place," he said, adding that while he would have gone anywhere Ms. Coakley asked, he specifically requested the city that supported him with "20,000 signs" during a 1998 visit in which Republicans were calling for his ouster.

The president's sentiment notwithstanding, campaign contributions suggest Ms. Coakley will likely hope Mr. Clinton's visit will help her in the right-leaning towns surrounding heavily Democratic Worcester. An analysis of state Office of Campaign and Political Finance records shows she was outraised nearly 5-to-1 by Republican opponent Charles D. Baker Jr. in Worcester County. Between September 2013, when both candidates announced their run, and Sept. 30 of this year, Ms. Coakley raised \$67,362 in Worcester County, records show, while Mr. Baker raised \$326,525. While Worcester County accounted for 8.3 percent of Mr. Baker's \$3.94 million state haul, it represented just 2.2 percent of Ms. Coakley's overall \$3.1 million tally.

"I said so in the beginning, this campaign is about ideas, not money," Ms. Coakley said Tuesday when asked about her struggles to fundraise in the county. "I think we will have sufficient funds to compete."

Mr. Clinton cast aspersions Thursday on super PAC money supporting Mr. Baker and denigrating Ms. Coakley during the election, particularly one ad that excoriated Ms. Coakley in her role as attorney general for defending a state agency that was failing children.

"Clearly a lie," Mr. Clinton said of the ad, criticizing Mr. Baker, who did not create it, for not calling on those who did to pull it from the air.

"(He) figured out more people would watch their televisions than would hear her press conference (refuting it)," Mr. Clinton said, repeatedly characterizing Mr. Baker and Republicans as out-of-touch affluent people who lack empathy for the disadvantaged.

"Do you really think they care about your kids or your families?" Mr. Clinton asked of the out-of-state money poured into super PAC ads. "They will be gone, and you will be left with your decisions and its consequences, for good or ill."

According to the state OCPF, super PACs have spent more than \$6 million supporting Mr. Baker or opposing Ms. Coakley, while \$3.7 million has been spent opposing Mr. Baker.

Simply put, Mr. Clinton said, Republicans are worried more about keeping their money than helping others, something he said is particularly evident when examining Mr. Baker's stances.

Mr. Clinton was effusive in his support for Ms. Coakley's platform of universal pre-kindergarten education, saying there is "no better investment for the future of Massachusetts" than making sure the 17,000 children on the waiting list for such education find placements.

"Her opponent says it's not that big of a deal," Mr. Clinton said, similarly criticizing Mr. Baker for his "blasé" reaction to the Hobby Lobby decision by the Supreme Court that struck down a federal mandate for employers to provide contraceptives to women.

Mr. Clinton also nixed Mr. Baker's opposition to the ballot question that would entitle employees to earn and use sick time as well as to raising the minimum wage.

In both instances, Mr. Clinton said, arguments that jobs would be lost and the economy would suffer are false.

"I've never been involved in a raising of minimum wage that wasn't beneficial to the economy," Mr. Clinton said, noting that Connecticut approved sick time a few years ago and has added jobs.

In addition to criticizing Republicans and Mr. Baker, Mr. Clinton praised what he sees as Ms. Coakley's personal strengths.

"You know she's going to do what she says she's going to do," Mr. Clinton said, lauding her efforts as attorney general protecting consumers, fighting cybercrime, taking on greedy insurance companies and recovering money from Medicare fraud.

Mr. Clinton also said that Ms. Coakley has the best record of any attorney general in the country when it came to helping people keep their homes following the 2008 economic crash. He said if it wasn't for her, 30,000 people in the state would have faced foreclosure.

"Quite simply, she's got a better record than her opponent," Mr. Clinton said. Repeating a refrain by all the speakers Thursday, he urged voters to get their friends motivated to go out and vote.

"I don't care what the polls say, she can win this race handily if you want it bad enough," Mr.

Clinton said.

In addition to speaking on her behalf Thursday, Mr. Clinton also helped raise money for Ms. Coakley, as a spokeswoman confirmed a fundraiser with the former president before his speech raised about \$200,000.

Mr. Clinton was not the only big-time politician stumping in the governor's race Thursday, as organizers from Mr. Baker's campaign said a fundraiser with former governor Mitt Romney in Boston was expected to raise \$600,000 Thursday evening for Mr. Baker's ticket and the state party.

"Charlie hopes President Clinton enjoys his time here in Massachusetts but believes the people of Massachusetts should be the focus of this race, not D.C. power players," Tim Buckley, Mr. Baker's head spokesman, wrote in an email Thursday. "That's why he is so proud to have the support of prominent Democrats, independents and Republicans from where it really counts."

As Mr. Buckley said, Mr. Baker has secured the support of multiple Democrats statewide, including former Worcester City Manager Michael V. O'Brien.

He has also out-raised Ms. Coakley in left-leaning cities, including Lawrence, Lynn and Gloucester - cities he lost in his failed 2010 gubernatorial bid.

"Charlie and Karyn have raised more funds from more communities in Massachusetts than their opponents," Jim Conroy, Mr. Baker's campaign manager, wrote in a release Thursday night.

"Charlie leads the race in low-dollar contributions."

Mr. Baker has not appeared publicly with many national Republican figures, while Ms. Coakley has enjoyed support from many Democratic mainstays.

"Hillary's coming up here in a few days, and you'll like that better," Mr. Clinton joked Thursday. In addition to the Clintons, first lady Michelle Obama campaigned with Ms. Coakley earlier this month, while Vice President Joseph Biden is set to come help her fundraise later this month.

Ms. Coakley was also talked up at Thursday's event by Gov. Deval Patrick, U.S. Rep. James P. McGovern and U.S. Sen. Edward J. Markey.

"It's going to have to happen out here in Worcester County," Mr. Markey said. "It always is won or lost in Worcester County."

If that's the case, the fundraising gap between the two could signal an uphill battle. In the more than 60 cities and towns in Worcester county, Ms. Coakley raised more than Mr. Baker in only five small towns.

"Does it present a disadvantage to her? Yes," said Michael P. Angelini, chairman of the law firm Bowditch & Dewey. "Unfortunately we live in a time when there's a lot of big money around, and money talks."

But the influential city Democrat said at the end of the day, everybody only has one vote. He said though it will be a struggle for Ms. Coakley in Worcester County, she can do well if she convinces the Democratic base to come support her principles.

"Martha Coakley has very strong beliefs. She may not express them with all the gusto that a loudmouth might, but that doesn't mean she's any less committed to them," he said.

Paul Watanabe, associate professor of political science at UMass-Boston, said he thinks Ms. Coakley has built momentum heading into Mr. Clinton's visit.

"She has really come out feisty in response to the ad about her advocacy of children," Mr. Watanabe said, adding that he isn't surprised at the funding gap she faces.

"I think the gap reflects a number of things, but it clearly reflects the fact that Charlie Baker as a Republican candidate is one like many predecessors before him of the Bill Weld and Paul Cellucci mold," he said. "A Republican with a chance can raise a lot of money."

Mr. Watanabe said though Mr. Clinton's visit could sway some voters, it isn't likely to make or break her showing in the county. What will be most important statewide, he said, is how Mr. Baker does with unenrolled voters.

"His once-big lead among unenrolled voters has shrunk considerably," he said, something that could spell "disaster" on Election Day.

Though some have painted the visits of the Clintons and others as signs of a fledgling campaign, Mr. Watanabe said he doesn't see it that way.

"This is not CPR that's being provided here," he said. "It's an important figure in the Democratic party embracing Martha Coakley and her candidacy."

What was clear Thursday, as Mr. Clinton posed for "selfie" photos with a few lucky college

students as secret service tried unsuccessfully to shoo him into a waiting SUV, was that the former president and Worcester embrace each other strongly. Whether that embrace extends to Ms. Coakley is a question Worcester County voters will answer Nov. 4.

NUNN, BIDEN VOLUNTEER AT HANDS ON ATLANTA DAY (MYAJC)

By Aaron Gould Sheinin

Atlanta Journal-Constitution, October 18, 2014

Democratic U.S. Senate hopeful Michelle Nunn returned to her volunteer roots on Saturday as she and Jill Biden volunteered at the 25th Hands on Atlanta Day service project.

Nunn, who founded the Hands on Atlanta volunteer organization, was joined by Biden, wife of Vice President Joe Biden, on a cloudless day in downtown Atlanta. Together the pair helped spread mulch and beautify a park on Boulevard after a rally at Fort Street United Methodist Church, while other volunteer teams spread out across the neighborhood.

While in Atlanta Biden will help raise money for Nunn's campaign against Republican David Perdue, but Saturday's event was decidedly non-partisan. The words "Perdue," "Senate," "Democrat" and "Republican" were never uttered.

JILL BIDEN VOLUNTEERS WITH GEORGIA SENATE CANDIDATE (HILL)

By Julian Hatter

The Hill, October 18, 2014

Second lady Jill Biden joined Democratic Senate hopeful Michelle Nunn and hundreds of volunteers in Atlanta on Saturday.

Biden and Nunn - who is challenging Republican David Perdue to replace retiring Sen. Saxby Chambliss (R-Ga.) in the upper chamber - worked on cleaning up a park in downtown Atlanta during an annual service day created by an organization Nunn founded 25 years ago, The Atlanta Journal-Constitution reported.

"We have jobs, we have families," Biden told the newspaper. "We have other obligations. The reason Michelle Nunn and a group of friends founded Hands on Atlanta Day 25 years ago is because we all know the value of community service."

Biden added that Nunn is "someone who is making a difference in Georgia."

Biden's trip to the state for a slew of fundraisers and campaign events comes as national political analysts sense growing momentum for Nunn. In recent polling, Nunn's campaign has closed the gap with Perdue and the two are currently running neck-and-neck, offering Democrats a rare opportunity to pick up a seat currently held by a Republican.

Vice President Joe Biden's wife attended three fundraisers in the day she was in town, in addition to the service project.

Talking to the Journal-Constitution, Nunn said that she formed the service organization Hands on Atlanta two and a half decades ago because "people will always answer the call to service."

"There's nothing we can't do, no wrong we can't right, when we work together," she said.

THOUSANDS VOLUNTEER FOR HANDS ON ATLANTA DAY (WXIATV)

WXIA-TV Atlanta, October 18, 2014

ATLANTA, Ga. - Saturday morning featured community service with a scoop of politics.

At the 25th annual Hands On Atlanta Day there were a couple guests helping to cleanup two urban parks in the Old Fourth Ward.

Hands on Atlanta Day was created 25 years ago by a group that included none other than Senate candidate Michelle Nunn. It was started as a way for thousands of volunteers to give back to their community. But Saturday, it served as a campaign event for Nunn who had a little help from the Second Lady, Dr. Jill Biden.

"She is someone who has devoted her life to public service and that's why I'm so excited to be with her today," Biden said during the event.

Dr. Biden helped out by scooping mulch, for about five or six minutes before she moved on.

Nunn, to her credit, stayed around for awhile. Though she wouldn't take questions, instead saying Saturday was about service, not politics.

"We've done a lot of projects over the years to clean up the community, different neighborhoods,"

said volunteer Terri Theisen, a past board member of Hands on Atlanta.

The volunteers were cleaning up two urban parks on Boulevard in the Old Fourth Ward. That included pulling weeds, raking leaves and painting railings.

"We have to be responsible. We have to take responsibility for our surroundings, so that's what I'm doing," said volunteer Ali Carter.

This year, Hands on Atlanta expects to provide more than 125,000 hours of community service.

OBAMA HOLDS SATURDAY NIGHT MEETING ON EBOLA (USAT)

By Gregory Korte

USA Today, October 18, 2014

WASHINGTON - President Obama held a rare Saturday night meeting with top advisers at the White House, convening national security staffers and public health officials to discuss the threat of Ebola.

The White House provided only a brief summary of the 75-minute meeting, saying White House advisers updated him on the "contact tracing" process used to identify and monitor people who may have come into contact with the Dallas health care workers who contracted Ebola.

Ron Klain, the newly announced White House Ebola "czar," was spotted entering the White House at about 5:30 p.m., but did not attend the meeting because he hasn't officially started, White House Communications Director Jennifer Palmieri said. He is still completing paperwork and hopes to start in the next week, she said.

Klain - whose official title will be "Ebola response coordinator" - did meet separately Saturday with White House Chief of Staff Denis McDonough "to start to get up to speed," Palmieri said.

Those attending the Saturday night meeting included Vice President Joe Biden, the secretaries of Defense, Health and Human Services and Homeland Security, and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Director Tom Frieden.

The meeting, which wasn't announced in advance, followed an afternoon of golf for the president at Fort Belvoir in Virginia. It's at least the third such meeting in four days with top administration officials devoted entirely to Ebola.

Obama departs Sunday for two days of political events, campaigning for Democratic candidates for governor in Maryland and Illinois Sunday. He will headline a Democratic National Committee event in Chicago Monday before returning to Washington.

In his weekly radio address Saturday morning, Obama urged Americans to educate themselves about the science behind how Ebola is - and isn't - spread.

"This is a serious disease, but we can't give in to hysteria or fear-because that only makes it harder to get people the accurate information they need," Obama said.

"We're a nation of more than 300 million people. To date, we've seen three cases of Ebola diagnosed here," he continued. "Now, even one infection is too many. At the same time, we have to keep this in perspective. As our public health experts point out, every year thousands of Americans die from the flu."

He also defended his decision not to institute a travel or visa ban to from the three African nations hardest hit by the epidemic, saying, "we can't just cut ourselves off from West Africa." Instituting a ban would make it harder to get aid to the region, he said, and cause people coming to the United States to lie about their travel histories.

OFFICIALS BRIEF OBAMA ON EBOLA RESPONSE (HILL)

By Rachel Huggins

The Hill, October 19, 2014

President Obama on Saturday evening met with members of his national security and public health teams for an update on the administration's response to the Ebola outbreak.

The president's advisers briefed him on the contact tracing process to identify and monitor individuals who may have come in contact with the two Dallas patients who've contracted the virus, according to a White House readout of the meeting.

Obama's team also reviewed measures to ensure that Dallas has resources to diagnose any additional cases safely and effectively.

Participants included Vice President Joe Biden, Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel, Health and Human Services Secretary Sylvia Burwell, White House Chief of Staff Denis McDonough, Director

of the Office of Management and Budget Shaun Donovan, National Security Advisor Susan Rice, Counselor to the President Neil Eggleston, Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Thomas Frieden, Deputy National Security Advisor Antony Blinken, Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism Lisa Monaco among others.

PRESIDENT OBAMA: AMERICANS SHOULDN'T 'GIVE IN TO HYSTERIA' ON EBOLA (NOTP)

By Bruce Alpert

New Orleans Times-Picayune, October 18, 2014

WASHINGTON, DC - President Barack Obama Saturday urged Americans not to "give in to hysteria," and realize that Ebola, while a serious disease, isn't an outbreak or epidemic in the United States.

"We're a nation of more than 300 million people," the president said in his weekly radio address. "To date, we've seen three cases of Ebola diagnosed here - the man who contracted the disease in Liberia, came here and sadly died; the two courageous nurses who were infected while they were treating him. Our thoughts and our prayers are with them, and we're doing everything we can to give them the best care possible. Now, even one infection is too many. At the same time, we have to keep this in perspective. As our public health experts point out, every year thousands of Americans die from the flu."

Moreover, the president said, "Ebola is actually a difficult disease to catch."

"It's not transmitted through the air like the flu," Obama said. "You cannot get it from just riding on a plane or a bus. The only way that a person can contract the disease is by coming into direct contact with the bodily fluids of somebody who is already showing symptoms. I've met and hugged some of the doctors and nurses who've treated Ebola patients. I've met with an Ebola patient who recovered, right in the Oval Office. And I'm fine."

"Third, we know how to fight this disease. We know the protocols. And we know that when they're followed, they work. So far, five Americans who got infected with Ebola in West Africa have been brought back to the United States-and all five have been treated safely, without infecting healthcare workers."

The president again rejected calls to block air travel from the three Western African nations at the epicenter of the disease, with 4,500 deaths so far. Among those advocating a travel ban - at least for non U.S. passport holders, are Gov. Bobby Jindal, Sen. David Vitter, R-La., Rep. Bill Cassidy, R-Baton Rouge, and Steve Scalise, R-Jefferson and Rep. John Fleming, R-Minden.

"We can't just cut ourselves off from West Africa, where this disease is raging," Obama said. "Our medical experts tell us that the best way to stop this disease is to stop it at its source-before it spreads even wider and becomes even more difficult to contain. Trying to seal off an entire region of the world-if that were even possible - could actually make the situation worse. It would make it harder to move health workers and supplies back and forth. Experience shows that it could also cause people in the affected region to change their travel, to evade screening, and make the disease even harder to track."

The president said that combating Ebola "will take time."

"Before this is over, we may see more isolated cases here in America," Obama said. "But we know how to wage this fight. And if we take the steps that are necessary, if we're guided by the science-the facts, not fear-then I am absolutely confident that we can prevent a serious outbreak here in the United States, and we can continue to lead the world in this urgent effort."

Cassidy, a physician who is running for the U.S. Senate, has sharply criticized Obama's approach, including his naming Friday of Ron Klain, an attorney and former chief of staff to Vice President Joe Biden and former Vice President Al Gore, to coordinate the administration's response. Cassidy said that the coordinator should have been someone with medical experience.

"By appointing a Democrat political operative as the 'Ebola czar,' it is clear that the President sees Ebola as a political crisis and not a health crisis," Cassidy said.

Josh Earnest, the president's spokesman, said Klain has extensive management experience, and proven ability to coordinate diverse agencies, public and private, to deal with complex problems. Sen. Mary Landrieu, D-La., said Thursday that "the people of Louisiana and the United States want us to be united when facing challenges - whether it is a disaster or a disease."

"We need smart, swift and decisive action by the federal government to contain Ebola," Landrieu said. "I urge the Administration to expand the current screenings from five to all 20 airports in the

United States where tourists, international workers and businesses leaders from West Africa arrive. In addition, it is important to remember in face of constant calls for budget cuts, that the investments we make today in our health care system, NIH research and emergency response training at our hospitals can help prevent and quickly contain diseases like Ebola."

EBOLA 'CZAR' KNOWS WASHINGTON, BUT NOT MEDICINE (AP)

By Josh Lederman

Associated Press, October 19, 2014

WASHINGTON - If there's one thing the "Ebola czar" knows, it's government.

Ron Klain, President Barack Obama's new point man on Ebola, has no medical or public health background. But he does have a wealth of experience managing unruly federal bureaucracies in times of crisis. The White House says that makes him the perfect candidate to shepherd the government's response to a deadly, growing outbreak.

Yet after demanding that Obama appoint a "czar," some Republicans are balking at the president's choice of a Washington insider and political operative to handle a public health emergency that has many Americans in fear.

And though Klain has tackled the national financial crisis and served as chief of staff to two vice presidents - he's even been portrayed by Kevin Spacey in an HBO film - his latest gig may prove his toughest challenge.

"He's there to get the job done, not win the Nobel Prize in medicine," said Bruce Reed, another former chief of staff to Vice President Joe Biden. Reed worked with Klain in both the Obama and Clinton administrations.

Under immense pressure to step up his response, Obama turned to Klain on Friday. He's being asked to synchronize an alphabet blizzard of federal agencies: the CDC, NIH, HHS, DHS, FDA and DOD, to name a few. All are working in one fashion or another to stem Ebola in the U.S. and in West Africa, but breakdowns in the system that led to two health workers contracting Ebola in Dallas have raised concerns that the government isn't doing enough.

No, his title isn't "czar." He's the government's Ebola response coordinator.

Klain was Obama's first choice for the job, said White House spokesman Josh Earnest. He's expected to stay on the job just five or six months and will report to Obama's homeland security adviser, Lisa Monaco, and his national security adviser, Susan Rice. Those two advisers have been at the forefront of the Ebola operation at the White House, but with other threats competing for their attention, Earnest said Obama saw a need to bring on outside help to focus exclusively on Ebola.

An attorney and longtime Democratic operative, Klain served as Vice President Al Gore's chief of staff and was a key figure during the 2000 Florida presidential election recount, leading to his portrayal by Spacey in the HBO film "Recount." He previously served under Attorney General Janet Reno in the Clinton administration and later as Biden's chief of staff.

During Obama's first term, Klain helped spearhead the roughly \$800 billion stimulus package in 2009 in response to the financial crisis - a massive, cross-government project that Klain's supporters say offers parallels to the challenge he is now undertaking with Ebola. Out of government since 2011, Klain is currently president of the holding company of former AOL chairman Steve Case and general counsel for a Washington-based technology venture capital firm.

Yet Republicans criticized Obama's selection, calling Klain's experience insufficient and wondering why the president didn't choose someone with a background in, say, infectious disease control.

With the midterm elections closing in, GOP lawmakers argued that picking a Democratic operative was tone-deaf to the public's growing concerns about Ebola and declining confidence in the government's competence.

"Leave it to President Obama to put a liberal political activist in charge of the administration's Ebola response," said Rep. John Fleming, R-La., himself a physician.

Former colleagues describe Klain as a born problem-solver with little patience for disorganization, waste or tardiness. When he oversaw the stimulus, his associates say, he was known for forcing agencies that didn't get along to cooperate.

"These situations can be pretty dark and seem extremely hopeless," said Jared Bernstein, Biden's former chief economist. "Ron's ability to see the best path to success keeps him and those around

him focused in a pretty positive way."

Associated Press writer Jim Kuhnhenn contributed to this report.

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LOOP GUIDANCE FOR NEW EBOLA CZAR RON KLAIN (WP)

By Al Kamen

Washington Post, October 18, 2014

First of all, congratulations on your new czarship. It's not White House counsel or chief of staff, but it's very important. (Besides, McDonough can't be there forever, right?)

There will be people who'll say you don't have any background in matters medical, but ignore them. You are eminently qualified. You clerked for Byron White, for crying out loud, and anyone who could handle Byron. . . And being chief of staff to both Al Gore and then Joe Biden isn't exactly a walk in the park.

Besides, the job apparently is to pull things together in the bureaucracy, to coordinate things and deal with Congress and the press. You're smart, savvy and you know this town and how it works better than most anyone. So maybe you're not an Everett Koop or Atul Gawande, but you'll be fine.

But always remember, you're dealing with irrational people demanding action, no matter how useless and even absurd it might be.

Congress doesn't want explanations and, as nature abhors a vacuum, most members abhor reason. Think of all the critics of "czars" - we recall John McCain's great tweet a while back that Obama had more czars than the Romanoff dynasty.

Obama has more czars than the Romanovs - who ruled Russia for 3 centuries. Romanovs 18, cyberczar makes 20.- John McCain (@SenJohnMcCain) May 30, 2009

(It was a funny tweet though.)

And now McCain has called for one as did other GOP members of Congress.

They want you to DO something. Anything. Counterproductive or stupid are not acceptable excuses. There have already been two confirmed cases of Ebola in this country.

So here's what you do.

First, you announce that "effective immediately," you are, as several members of Congress have demanded, banning all (repeat "all" for emphasis) non-stop flights from the West African countries most affected - Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia.

Furthermore, you say, you are, under the powers granted to you, immediately (repeat for emphasis) ordering the United States Air Force to shoot down any passenger planes violating the ban.

Since there are, in fact, no non-stop flights from those countries, this should be no problem. You might think this is crazy, because other countries may follow suit, thereby crippling the economies in West Africa just when they need all the resources they can muster to battle Ebola. (You would be right, but, as Margaret Thatcher once famously told Bush I on the eve of the first Persian Gulf war in 1990: "This is no time to go wobbly, George.")

Sure, most people come to this country after boarding connecting flights in Paris, Brussels or London. Some 36,000 a day come from the most affected countries, with 25 percent headed to the United States. Admit that's a problem and say you're working on it "in consultation with our allies."

(A reassuring way to say you're having a conference call.)

Finally, the trickiest move of all - though the White House will be forever indebted to you. You are, with great sadness, taking Fox News off the air lest viewers come across anchor Shepherd Smith's long, articulate and impassioned segment Wednesday condemning "hysterical" and "irresponsible" media coverage and explaining what's actually happening with Ebola using real, true facts to insist "there is no Ebola spreading in America," so everyone should get a goddamn grip, calm down and get a flu shot.

Finally, you should emphasize (use somber, remorseful tones here) your "profound and abiding" respect for the First Amendment and explain that this a temporary measure, albeit necessary because we're dealing with the end of civilization here.

Good luck.

HILLARY TO HIT BOSTON ON FRIDAY TO STUMP FOR COAKLEY (BOSH)

By Matt Stout

Boston Herald, October 19, 2014

Former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton is set to sweep into Boston next Friday to give a star-powered bump to Democratic gubernatorial nominee Martha Coakley, who's counting on a long list of high-profile surrogates to help energize voters.

Clinton, long viewed as a potential 2016 White House contender, will appear at an afternoon rally with Coakley at the Park Plaza Hotel in downtown Boston, a campaign aide said - a little more than a week after her husband, former President Bill Clinton, stumped for Coakley in Worcester. It adds to a growing list of power players who have already turned out for the attorney general in her neck-and-neck race with Republican nominee Charlie Baker.

First lady Michelle Obama appeared with her earlier this month in Dorchester, as did Vice President Joe Biden, who is set to return to headline a fundraiser for Coakley on Oct. 29. Bill Clinton addressed 800 supporters at Clark University yesterday before skipping off to Manchester, N.H., where he delivered a similar stump speech to Democrats there.

Rumblings of a Hillary Clinton visit have floated around the Coakley campaign for weeks after the Herald reported earlier this month that Democrats were working to lure the former first lady to the Hub to help pump some much-needed cash into Coakley's campaign.

A fundraiser with Bill Clinton helped pull in \$200,000, Coakley's campaign said, but even after taking nearly \$300,000 in public financing this month, she and running mate Steve Kerrigan still trail Baker by nearly \$1.2 million in cash on hand as of midmonth.

More details on Hillary Clinton's visit weren't available last night, Coakley's campaign said.

With policy plans trotted out and a series of debates separating the candidates from the Nov. 4 vote, appearances by the Clintons and others are targeted at stirring momentum and energy in a base that traditionally skips the voting booths when a president isn't on the ballot.

"Don't forget this: This matters," Bill Clinton implored of supporters in Worcester. "Every one of you will speak in these next 19 days to a hundred people who might not vote. Every one of you. And if they all do vote, we'll all be celebrating on Election Day."

BIDEN'S SON WON'T HAVE CONN. LAW LICENSE REVIEWED AFTER POSITIVE COCAINE TEST (NLDAY)

By Stephen Braun

New London (CT) Day, October 18, 2014

Washington - Hunter Biden, the youngest son of Vice President Joe Biden, faces no automatic review of his law license in Connecticut following his discharge from the U.S. Navy Reserve after testing positive for cocaine use, Connecticut legal authorities said Friday.

Hunter Biden works in Washington as a private equity executive and board director of an international energy firm, but he is admitted to practice law in Connecticut, where attorneys' privileges can be examined under a disciplinary review system. Legal clients, state lawyers, judges and any citizen can file grievances, but as of Friday, none had been filed, authorities said.

Lawyers in Connecticut face automatic review of their bar admission only when they have been convicted of a crime, said Michael P. Bowler, Connecticut's Statewide Bar Counselor, who heads a team of lawyers that investigate attorney grievances. Criminal convictions have to be reviewed by a statewide grievance committee, as do other complaints, which can range from drug and alcohol abuse to inadequate legal representation.

"At this point, I'm not aware that Mr. Biden has been arrested for anything, and certainly not convicted," Bowler said. The Navy's brief confirmation of Biden's discharge did not cite any arrest or charges. Two people familiar with the matter told The Associated Press he was kicked out after testing positive for cocaine, confirming what was first reported by The Wall Street Journal.

Bowler added that Biden had told state authorities in 2007 that he was also admitted to the bar in Washington, D.C. Current District of Columbia bar records do not show Biden as member.

The Navy said Thursday that Biden was discharged in February from a part-time position as a public affairs officer in the Navy Reserve but did not provide a reason. Biden released a statement through his attorney saying, "I deeply regret and am embarrassed that my actions led to my administrative discharge."

Biden, 44, a former Washington lobbyist, is a managing partner at the Rosemont Seneca Partners investment firm and a director at Burisma Holdings, a Ukraine-based energy company. A Washington lobbyist for Burisma, David Leiter, did not respond to requests for comment from The Associated Press.

Mark Dubois, the president of the Connecticut Bar Association, said that state bar and ethics officials are sensitive to news accounts involving misbehavior of lawyers admitted to practice in the state, but he said, "They have to be judicious about starting the process."

Dubois, who formerly investigated and prosecuted ethical misconduct as Connecticut Disciplinary Counsel, said authorities have initiated cases in the past involving drug and alcohol abuse by attorneys, but "only when it's a fairly extensive record of abuse."

NEW YORK TIMES AND WASHINGTON POST OP-EDS:

A RATE CAP FOR ALL CONSUMER LOANS (NYT)

New York Times, October 19, 2014

The Obama administration has proposed much-needed improvements in federal rules that are supposed to protect service members from predatory loans that trap them in debt and, in certain circumstances, can end their military careers. The changes would repair glaring weaknesses in the rules used to carry out the Military Lending Act of 2007. But the administration and Congress should not stop there. Millions of civilians are also exposed to ruinously priced loans. What is needed is a national consumer lending standard - and interest rate cap - to ensure fair credit in the country as a whole.

The Military Lending Act sought to protect service members from debt traps by applying a 36 percent interest cap and other consumer protections to a subset of products, including certain kinds of payday loans and vehicle title loans. However, open-ended credit, long-term installment loans and some other products fell outside those rules.

Even after the law was passed, a South Carolina lender gave a service member a \$1,615 title loan on a 13-year-old car and charged \$15,613 in interest - an annual rate of 400 percent - without violating federal law. The new proposed rules close this and other loopholes by applying the 36 percent cap to most credit products aimed at service members, with some common-sense exemptions.

Troops who are saddled with excessive debt are burdensome to the military. They have morale problems and are costlier to manage because they need counseling and other services. Debt also affects military readiness: Thousands of troops have been barred from serving abroad because the debt they carry is thought to make them security risks.

The predatory loans that are pushing service members into penury, however, are not unique to them. Earlier this year, for example, the federal Consumer Financial Protection Bureau found that hidden fees and charges on payday loans were so high that only 15 percent of borrowers could raise the money to repay the total debt on time without quickly borrowing again. Nearly two-thirds of the borrowers were forced to renew their loans - some more than 10 times - depleting their resources and digging them deeper and deeper into financial holes.

Poor and working-class people across the country are being driven into poverty and default by deceptively packaged, usuriously priced loans. The obvious solution is a national standard for consumer lending. Both the House and Senate have bills pending that would adopt the 36 percent standard for all consumer transactions, including those involving payday loans, mortgages, car loans, credit cards, overdraft loans and so on.

Predatory lenders and their surrogates in Congress may claim that a national standard is inconsistent with free enterprise. In truth, rate caps were found in all of the original 13 colonies. Moreover, 46 states and the District of Columbia set interest limits on at least some of the small loans typically offered by payday lenders.

Payday lending expanded significantly during the 1990s, when many states unwisely exempted the lenders from usury caps. Since then, many states have seen the light, but not nearly enough. Resourceful payday lenders have also managed to evade even tough state laws by setting up shop elsewhere or using the Internet. It's clearly time for a national standard.

FROM JIMMY CARTER, A REBUKE TO EGYPT (NYT)

New York Times, October 19, 2014

Over three decades, the Carter Center in Atlanta, led by former President Jimmy Carter, has established itself as a respected advocate for human rights and democracy. It has sent observers to 97 elections in 38 countries, worked to persuade governments to respect freedoms and human rights, and supported citizens who defend those principles. But it has thrown in the towel on Egypt. In a statement last week, the center announced that it would close its Cairo office after nearly three years and would not send experts to monitor parliamentary elections later this year. "The current environment in Egypt is not conducive to genuine democratic elections and civic participation," Mr. Carter said as part of the statement, which warned that political campaigning in an already polarized situation "could be extremely difficult, and possibly dangerous, for critics of the regime."

The center's withering judgment is a damning critique of Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, a former general who overthrew President Mohamed Morsi, an Islamist allied with the Muslim Brotherhood, in 2013. It also sends two powerful messages to the Obama administration.

One is that playing down Mr. Sisi's repressive tactics is bound to backfire and drive aggrieved Egyptians to violence and extremism, destabilizing both Egypt and the region.

The other is that absent a radical shift in Egypt's approach, there is no way Secretary of State John Kerry can credibly certify to Congress anytime soon that the country is on a democratic path. That certification is a condition of Egypt's receiving \$650 million worth of American tanks and fighter planes. It should be withheld until Mr. Sisi shows he is serious about putting in place "a state that respects the rights and freedoms," which he disingenuously described in a United Nations speech in September.

Washington is obviously concerned about upsetting an important Arab ally that honors its peace treaty with Israel and permits expedited passage through the vital Suez Canal. But at some point the United States must draw a line. It would also be helpful if Israel, which prides itself on its democracy and has productive ties with Mr. Sisi, encouraged him to abandon the authoritarian course he has followed ever since he got himself elected president in a rigged vote in 2014. Mr. Sisi has cracked down on dissidents, opposition groups and journalists, including three respected professionals working for Al Jazeera. The Carter Center expressed alarm about the mass arrests of Brotherhood leaders and supporters, whom Egypt has unfairly branded as terrorists. More than 16,000 people are in jail for political reasons; more than 1,000 were killed during protests.

A so-called protest law passed in 2013 sharply limits freedoms of expression and assembly. Another law dating from the regime of Hosni Mubarak, who was ousted in 2011, is aimed at regulating nongovernmental civic groups as well as international organizations like the Carter Center. The center noted that Mr. Sisi's government was tightening enforcement of that law while proposing a new law that would be even more restrictive. Mr. Sisi has also amended the penal code so that anyone charged with receiving money or arms from a foreign country or organization could face a life sentence.

In 2013, an Egyptian court found more than three dozen employees of foreign nonprofit groups, including 16 Americans, guilty of receiving illegal funds from abroad and operating unlicensed organizations. Most of those charged left the country and did not serve prison time, but the threat of further arrests has increased.

Nongovernmental interest groups of all kinds, including the Carter Center, obviously have cause for alarm. But so do all Egyptians who do not toe Mr. Sisi's authoritarian line, and that cannot possibly instill confidence in the foreign investors and tourists who are vital to rebuilding Egypt's troubled economy. America must do what it can to persuade Mr. Sisi to abandon this dangerous course.

THE HOUSE'S ETHICS LESSON FOR THE SENATE (NYT)

New York Times, October 19, 2014

The public's low opinion of Congress has had one good effect: It has helped to insulate the Office of Congressional Ethics from members of Congress who might privately pray for the office's demise.

The semi-independent ethics office was created six years ago, after the Jack Abramoff corruption scandal, and has since become a credible watchdog of misbehavior by House members, who dare

not abolish it, much as many of them resent its oversight. The office has built such a strong reputation of nonpartisanship and professionalism in conducting discreet preliminary investigations of accusations against House members that it stands as a powerful argument for creating a parallel office in the Senate, which has no such ethics monitor.

The chambers' differing approach to enforcing their ethics codes is no small matter in modern politics, with the rising torrent of secret and unregulated campaign money inevitably driving quid pro quo suspicions. Almost half of the complaints fielded by the House ethics office involve aspects of campaign money.

The Federal Election Commission has such a woeful enforcement record in this area that Congress's own ethics committees face a greater responsibility to guard against misbehaving lawmakers. Unfortunately, members of the Senate carry out ethics investigations in murky privacy, devoid of the sort of accounting to the public that the House ethics office is required to make.

These differences have been laid out in a new study showing that the House's own ethics committee has become much more active since the ethics office was created to vet complaints, not quietly bury them. Even without subpoena power, which it should have, the office referred about a third of its inquiries to the ethics committee for further consideration. As a result, 20 disciplinary actions were approved by the House committee in the last five years - four times the rate in pre-O.C.E. periods, according to the study by Public Citizen, an ethics watchdog group.

In contrast, the Senate ethics committee has been as lumbering and guarded as a tortoise, dismissing most complaints with just a few letters of admonition and no disciplinary actions voted against members in the last seven years. A person familiar with the procedures of the Senate committee told The National Journal that the vast majority of accusations received do not fall under its jurisdiction and involve complaints about the executive branch or floor speeches by lawmakers. This may be so, but why is the public told so little about complaints that might merit review?

In the House, complaints the ethics office sends along to the ethics committee must be disclosed regularly as something the public is plainly entitled to know.

THE EBOLA SCARE (NYT)

By Ross Douthat

New York Times, October 19, 2014

I PROMISED myself I wouldn't do it, but I did: While flying from D.C. to Dallas last week, just after the news came out that an Ebola-infected nurse had been allowed to fly while running a fever, I went back and read the opening pages of Stephen King's "The Stand."

In King's epic, perhaps his finest, a superflu with a 99.4 percent fatality rate accidentally escapes from a desert laboratory and lays waste to civilization. King being King, supernatural developments ensue for the survivors. But the book is at its most terrifying in the unraveling with which it opens, when the only bogeyman that matters is a hacking cough that spreads and spreads and spreads. To reread these pages now - in a time of national, well, not panic but least disquiet over the handling of Ebola inside our borders - is to be struck both by parallels and by crucial differences between the scenario King conjured and what we fear today.

The parallels lie, not surprisingly, in the realm of official incompetence. King's superflu escapes because various computerized safeguards fail; it spreads because of interagency chaos in chasing down patient zero; it compromises a C.D.C. facility whose safeguards turn out to be insufficient.

The chaos swirling around the Dallas Ebola infections has followed this kind of pattern: the patient sent home undiagnosed; the unprepared hospital and the infected nurses; the C.D.C.'s weird slowness in taking over; the confident governmental assurances giving way to blame-shifting, double talk and the appointment of a political hack as Ebola princeps ... er ... sultan ... er, czar. But the differences are interesting as well. King's novel, infused with 1970s-era paranoia, imagines a government that blunders constantly but is also malignantly competent - brilliant enough to design a superflu capable of killing 99 percent of humanity, tyrannical enough to suppress media reports with martial law and murder, ruthless enough to swiftly spread the superflu behind the Iron Curtain to make sure our enemies go down with us.

This part of the novel's vision is of a piece with all of modern conspiracy culture, which requires a certain level of omniscience to sustain its theories about covered-up alien landings or 9/11 inside jobs.

But conspiracy culture, while always resilient, has had a tough go of it of late. From the Iraq war to Hurricane Katrina and various Obama-era debacles, the public has been steadily conditioned to fear government incompetence much more than it fears secret conspiracies against the public good. Instead of the Bilderbergers and the Trilateralists and the cigarette-smoking man, it's Mike "heckuva job" Brown and George "slam dunk" Tenet and whoever was allegedly in charge of the V.A. hospital system who haunt our collective unconscious these days. People still indulge the occasional "House of Cards"-style fantasy of all-powerful political puppetmasters, but what actually scares us is the idea of the Ebola epidemic being managed by the gang from "Veep."

I suspect that's part of why Obama-era scandals that may actually involve secret government machinations - from the N.S.A. revelations to the harassment of journalists and the politicized overreach of Lois Lerner's I.R.S. division - haven't fixed themselves in the public imagination, at least among people who don't have an explicit ideological or political interest at stake. Wisely or not, Americans have trouble imagining the White House that gave us the HealthCare.gov rollout micromanaging partisan I.R.S. chicanery, or the national security bureaucracy that couldn't see 9/11 or the Islamic State coming doing anything all that Machiavellian with a firehose's worth of online data.

Likewise with Ebola: Of course you can find wild conspiracy theories, but the idea of a successful government cover-up - secret body bags, muzzled journalists - is basically laughable. Instead, the baseline anxiety is all about bureaucratic incompetence exacerbated by insouciance, with conservatives fearing that a liberal administration won't be willing to go far enough - in terms of travel restrictions and quarantines - to effectively contain the disease's spread.

Because plausible arguments have been offered for and against a travel ban, the administration's actual response will be an interesting case study. As much as the authorities have fouled up so far, we've only had a few infections. If the White House continues to resist calls for more dramatic measures, and we manage to contain Ebola domestically, then the president and his appointees will look more competent and levelheaded than their critics - a result that's all too rare these days. Given the track record, however, it's easy to imagine somewhat less fortunate results, and travel restrictions increasingly seem like an appropriate hedge against ongoing domestic incompetence. But it would be welcome, and then some, to watch a competent strategy unfold that rendered that opinion obsolete.

And then, our faith in government's effectiveness partially restored, we can all get back to worrying about what's being secretly cooked up in the Nevada desert.

THE VIRUS OF CYNICISM (NYT)

By Frank Bruni

New York Times, October 19, 2014

WE have no clue at this point how far Ebola could spread in the United States - and no reason for panic.

But one dimension of the disease's toll is clear. It's ravaging Americans' already tenuous faith in the competence of our government and its bureaucracies.

Before President Obama's election, we had Iraq, Katrina and the meltdown of banks supposedly under Washington's watch. Since he came along to tidy things up, we've had the staggeringly messy rollout of Obamacare, the damnable negligence of the Department of Veterans Affairs and the baffling somnambulism of the Secret Service.

Now this. Although months of a raging Ebola epidemic in West Africa gave the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention sufficient warning and ample time to get ready for any cases here, it was caught flat-footed, as its director, Tom Frieden, is being forced bit by bit to acknowledge.

Weeks ago he assured us: "We are stopping Ebola in its tracks in this country." Over recent days he updated that assessment, saying that "in retrospect, with 20/20 hindsight," federal officials could and should have done more at the Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital in Dallas.

President Obama made his own assurances and then corrections. He said back in mid-September that "in the unlikely event that someone with Ebola does reach our shores, we've taken new measures so that we're prepared here at home."

Well, we weren't wholly prepared, and the event was never unlikely: This country is a potent magnet for travelers, with a proudly (and rightly) open posture toward the world. People stream in all the time. And a federally funded study published in early September calculated a nearly 20

percent "probability of Ebola virus disease case importation" within three weeks. Within four, Thomas Duncan, the Liberian man who was initially (and inexplicably) turned away from the Dallas hospital, was at last admitted and treated for Ebola.

After that screw-up by hospital officials, Frieden told us that the right protocols were in place. But it now appears that Duncan wasn't immediately put in isolation; that nurses attending to him were confused about the proper use of protective garb; and that the clothing they wore may have left bits of skin exposed.

We've learned of the C.D.C.'s bizarrely permissive attitude toward the hospital workers who came in contact with Duncan or his lab samples. While they should have been on restricted movement, one took flights - after first calling the C.D.C. for a green light - from Texas to Ohio and back. Another boarded a cruise ship. By Monday, will we find out about a C.D.C.-approved game of Twister in the hospital staff room?

This is bad, not because it means that a large number of Americans are at risk of infection but because it confirms the sloppiness of the very institutions in which we place the most trust. It's spreading the virus of cynicism.

And the C.D.C.'s missteps have much different implications from the errors made by the Secret Service and by Veterans Affairs. Individual Americans don't fear that the Secret Service's lapses will endanger them personally, and many of them aren't directly affected by the wrongdoing of hospitals for veterans. But they can imagine themselves on one of those flights or in some other closed space with an infected person. They feel vulnerable.

Because the Ebola response deepens doubt about the current government, it almost certainly hurts incumbents in the midterm elections and favors change. That's unhappy news for Democrats as they fight to retain control of the Senate, and by the end of last week, they were spooked. I heard that not only in my conversations with party strategists but also in the statements of Democratic candidates themselves.

BRUCE BRALEY, locked in a tight Senate race in Iowa, publicly upbraided the Obama administration for what he characterized as a sluggish response. Al Franken, running for re-election in Minnesota, said there should at least be serious consideration of the sorts of flight restrictions that Obama has dismissed. Even Jay Carney, the president's former spokesman, mentioned such restrictions as potentially wise policy.

Rationally or not, this is one of those rare moments when Americans who typically tune out so much of what leaders say are paying rapt attention, and Obama's style of communication hasn't risen fully to the occasion. Even as he canceled campaign appearances and created a position - Ebola czar - that we were previously told wasn't necessary, he spoke with that odd dispassion of his, that maddening distance.

About the ban, he said, "I don't have a philosophical objection necessarily." About the czar, he said that it might be good to have a person "to make sure that we're crossing all the T's and dotting all the I's going forward." He's talking theory and calligraphy while Americans are focused on blood, sweat and tears.

Ebola is his presidency in a petri dish. It's an example already of his tendency to talk too loosely at the outset of things, so that his words come back to haunt him. There was the doctor you could keep under his health plan until, well, you couldn't. There was the red line for Syria that he didn't have to draw and later erased.

With Ebola, he said almost two weeks ago that "we're doing everything that we can" with an "all-hands-on-deck approach." But on Wednesday and Thursday he announced that there were additional hands to be put on deck and that we could and would do more. The shift fit his pattern: not getting worked up in the early stages, rallying in the later ones.

It's more understandable in this case than in others, because when it comes to statements about public health, the line between adequately expressed concern and a license for hysteria is thin and not easily determined. Still, he has to make Americans feel that he understands their alarm, no matter how irrational he deems it, and that they're being leveled with, not talked down to, not handled. And he has a ways to go.

"If you were his parent, you'd want to shake him," said one Democratic strategist, who questioned where Obama's passion was and whether, even this deep into his presidency, he appreciated one of the office's most vital functions: deploying language, bearing, symbols and ceremony to endow Americans with confidence in who's leading them and in how they're being led.

Right now in this country there's a crisis of confidence, and of competence, and that's the fertile ground in which the Ebola terror flowers. That's the backdrop for whatever steps Obama and Frieden take from here. With the right ones, they can go a long way toward calming people who are anxious not just about Ebola but about America. I don't even want to think about the wrong ones.

AN AFFAIR TO REMEMBER, DIFFERENTLY (NYT)

By Maureen Dowd

New York Times, October 19, 2014

WE live in a world awash in unreliable narrators.

Officials at the Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital were unreliable narrators on Ebola. The Internet is bristling with unreliable narrators who prefer their takes to the truth. The unsavory husband and wife in the thriller "Gone Girl" are such chillingly unreliable narrators that they easily beat out the undead unreliable narrator, Dracula, at the box office. And let's not even start on Fox News.

So now comes the riveting "Rashomon" in Montauk, Showtime's "The Affair," with Ruth Wilson and Dominic West offering alternating he recalls-she recalls versions of the same story in each show, as they get swept up in sexual infidelity and a serious crime during a shimmering summer.

I went to Brooklyn to talk to West - the British actor who played the raffish Baltimore detective Jimmy McNulty in "The Wire" on HBO - and the show's co-creator, Sarah Treem, as they shot scenes at a school there.

West's character, Noah, is a novelist and teacher who lives in a Brooklyn brownstone with his wife, played by Maura Tierney, and four kids. He's happily married but feeling insecure about the lackluster performance of his first novel. It gets worse when his wife giggles at his facial expression during lovemaking, and he's taunted by his arrogant father-in-law, a famous fiction writer who owns the oceanfront mansion in the Hamptons where the family is spending the summer.

When West meets Wilson's comely Alison, a diner waitress and Montauk native who is also married to someone she loves (Joshua Jackson) and also feeling uncertain and anxious, the chase is on.

But who's chasing whom? In West's memory, Alison is sultry and curvy, wearing sexy outfits and seducing him. In Alison's version, she's wan and withdrawn, still mourning the drowning death of her small son and dubious about Noah's aggressive blandishments.

Treem, a playwright and "House of Cards" writer, created "The Affair" with Hagai Levi, with whom she also worked on HBO's "In Treatment."

Treem said the new show uses sex to illustrate that the characters are "trying to connect and they fail at it all the time. I think we have a lot of sex in this show, but in terms of the sex where they're actually unified, that happens very rarely."

Treem is a newlywed. In June, she married Jay Carson, a former campaign spokesman for Howard Dean and Hillary Clinton who is a producer on "House of Cards" and the father of Treem's nearly 2-year-old son. Yet the brainy, alluring 34-year-old has an intriguingly jaded philosophy of romance.

"I have this belief that, in all relationships, there's this long erotic moment that happens at the beginning of the relationship," she said. "It's like the pole of a tetherball court, and then everything else is just basically that damn ball going around, winding and unwinding around that one erotic moment, and you're trying to always get back to that incredible moment of connection with somebody, and it's gone forever."

She said they put up a quote by the poet Robert Hass in the writers' room, the final line of a passage where he describes the sensation of making love to a woman: "I felt a violent wonder at her presence like a thirst for salt, for my childhood river with its island willows, silly music from the pleasure boat, muddy places where we caught the little orange-silver fish called pumpkinseed. It hardly had to do with her. Longing, we say, because desire is full of endless distances."

I tell her that Carson asked me if he should be worried, given how knowingly his wife writes about infidelity.

She laughed, replying, "I wrote the show when I was still single at 31, so at that point in your life you see a lot of infidelity. You have married men coming on to you. You see your friends already in

affairs. From my perspective at that point, infidelity was all over the place. Now, being married, I would like my marriage to work. I love him, and I want to be faithful to him, and I want him to be faithful to me." But, she adds matter-of-factly, "you probably have a 20 percent chance, maybe a 10 percent chance, of actually getting through an entire marriage with no infidelity."

When I ask her if she thinks that men are more prone to cheat, she instantly replies: "Yes, I do." West agrees that the show may be "a shag-a-thon," as he merrily put it, but its real subject is meant to be marriage.

"When you have four kids, inevitably your sex life suffers," said West, himself a father of four. "But, for me, in my 20s and 30s, the stakes are much higher if you're unfaithful. I feel, as you get older, the stakes get a lot lower. I don't think infidelity would bother either me or my wife so much as if anything happened to our children, for instance. It ceases to be the primary anxiety."

WHEN I mentioned that it was interesting how, in Noah's remembrance, Alison has fuller breasts, West's eyes widened in surprise.

"Does she?" he said, laughing. "Is that right? Well spotted."

The actor said that, after playing Iago and the English serial killer Fred West, he yearned for a more heroic role.

"I was really keen to play a good guy," he said, with a wry smile. "So this is the good guy I'm playing - a cheating husband."

AS EBOLA RAGES IN AFRICA, THE INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE CONTINUES TO LAG (WP)
Washington Post, October 19, 2014

THE VIRUS particles that cause the Ebola and Marburg hemorrhagic fevers are shaped like filaments, straight and sometimes curled, 80 billionths of a meter in diameter. Once they have infected a person, the particles replicate in many human organs, including the liver, spleen, kidney, lungs and lymph nodes, destroying cells and leading to death in more than half the cases.

This cycle is repeating itself relentlessly in the outbreak zone of Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea. The toll continues to soar in what one expert, Michael Osterholm, has called "virus time," and it is outpacing the decisions of nations. Last spring, much of the world wasn't even listening to the cries for help from Doctors Without Borders, which has been at the front lines of fighting the virus in West Africa. Now, the alarms about cases in the United States have reached a crescendo, in waves of panic fueled by hyperactive news and social media. But the actual response on the front lines of the epidemic - in Africa - is lagging in what Mr. Osterholm called "bureaucratic program time."

Debate in the United States continues to be focused on the wrong question: whether travel to this country from West Africa should be banned. As virtually every credible public health authority has said, it shouldn't be. Restricting travel will not prevent potential Ebola carriers from reaching this country, only make them more difficult to track. Ron Klain, the veteran political manager appointed by President Obama to oversee the U.S. response, should start by rejecting these politically-motivated and irresponsible demands.

If there is something to panic about, it is the failure to get ahead of the outbreak in Africa. Should the international community not stop Ebola in the epicenter of the outbreak, it could well spread to other vulnerable regions with weak public health infrastructure, and then beyond in a tableau that will dwarf today's crisis, which has so far killed at least 4,546 people and infected more than 9,100 in the three nations where it began.

On Friday, Christopher Stokes of Doctors Without Borders said Ebola was still out of control in the region, and it was "ridiculous" that volunteers for the charity are still bearing the brunt of care in the worst-affected areas, running about 700 of the 1,000 treatment beds available in the region. The United States, Britain and some other nations, after a slow start, have rallied with funding pledges and are now building more treatment facilities. While encouraging, Mr. Stokes told the BBC that the latest efforts are still "not having any significant impact on the epidemic and it won't now for maybe another month or month and a half."

Tolbert Nyenswah, the head of Liberia's response effort, was quoted by the Wall Street Journal as saying, "Tell the international community that they have failed Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea, and they are still failing. They knew our health system did not have the capacity." In addition to treatment facilities, the region desperately needs doctors and nurses to cope with the epidemic. The experts are clear: What is required to prevent Ebola from spreading to the United States is

quicker and more comprehensive action in Africa. The world needs to meet Ebola on virus time.

THE POST ENDORSES MURIEL BOWSER FOR D.C. MAYOR (WP)

Washington Post, October 19, 2014

D.C. RESIDENTS have reason to be disaffected with city government and politics. The incumbent mayor has operated under the shadow of the illegal campaign fundraising that helped to put him in office. Three members of the D.C. Council left their offices in disgrace. This sad state of affairs played a part in the unusually low turnout for the April primary, and it may help explain why many voters say they remain uninspired by the mayoral election just 2½ weeks away.

We hope they look again. This is a critical election, and it offers a clear choice. Despite the ethical cloud that has hung over Mayor Vincent C. Gray and contributed to his defeat in the Democratic primary, he will leave office in January with the city on generally sound footing. Its finances are healthy, its schools are attracting more families every year and many neighborhoods are reinvigorated. His successor must maintain that momentum while providing the leadership to confront new challenges.

Muriel Bowser, Ward 4's representative on the council and the Democratic nominee, is the candidate best prepared to provide that leadership. We endorsed her in the primary but acknowledged it was not an easy choice because of the capable opponents then running against her. We faced no such dilemma this time. Neither council member David A. Catania (I-At Large) nor former council member Carol Schwartz comes close to Ms. Bowser in temperament, work ethic, ideas, policy understanding and balanced approach.

We don't discount Ms. Schwartz's past accomplishments (notwithstanding her wrong-headed opposition to the mayor's takeover of the schools) or her love of the city, but sentimentality cannot advance the District or the interests of its residents. She has failed to present a credible rationale for her independent candidacy.

Mr. Catania also can point to accomplishments in his 17 years on the D.C. Council, including his advocacy for same-sex marriage and his oversight of health care in the District. But he also has been on the wrong side of many important issues. If it were up to Mr. Catania, it is likely there would be no city-financed baseball stadium for the Nationals to play in and no convention center to attract visitor dollars, not to mention the hundreds of jobs created by both projects. The money-draining D.C. General Hospital might still be limping along. That Mr. Catania seems unable to concede he might have been wrong is all the more troubling.

Also worrisome has been Mr. Catania's stewardship of the council's education committee, which roughly coincided with his interest in becoming mayor. Instead of forging a meaningful collaboration with the city's able schools chancellor, Kaya Henderson, he set out to pass a series of bills that were sure to capture headlines but would do little to improve schools. D.C. schools are on the mend because Mr. Gray and his predecessor, Adrian M. Fenty (D), put competent professionals in place and let them do the job. The well-documented concerns about Mr. Catania's temperament raise questions about what kind of leader he would be - "bully" is a word that crops up with disturbing frequency - and have been amplified by the often mean-spirited campaign he has run.

Ms. Bowser, by contrast, has grown only stronger as her candidacy has progressed. A lifelong Washingtonian, she is well positioned to bring substance to the "One City" motto that Mr. Gray articulated but had trouble fulfilling. She is committed to better serving longtime residents, especially the poor who have benefited least from Washington's rise, but also appreciates the urgency of attracting businesses and welcoming new residents. Her travel to other cities has given her insights into what works and what doesn't and bespeaks a refreshing willingness to admit there are things she doesn't know.

Those critical or jealous of Ms. Bowser have painted a caricature of a lightweight. That is not the tough politician we have come to know and admire in her seven years on the council. She strikes us as smart, capable and confident without being arrogant. On the council, she has learned the ins and outs of government, from zoning to ethics to tree canopies. As mayor she says she would set priorities, find the right people to pursue them - including a professional city administrator - and give them the support to get it right. She has said that chancellor Henderson and Police Chief Cathy L. Lanier would be among those on her team, if they agree to stay.

We enthusiastically endorse Muriel Bowser. She is the clear, best choice for voters on Nov. 4.

STANDARDIZED TESTS MUST MEASURE UP (WP)

By Arne Duncan

Washington Post, October 19, 2014

As a parent, I want to know how my children are progressing in school each year. The more I know, the more I can help them build upon their strengths and interests and work on their weaknesses. The more I know, the better I can reinforce at home each night the hard work of their teachers during the school day.

The standardized tests my kids take are one gauge on the dashboard, but parents and educators know that tests are not the only indicator.

Last week, state education chiefs and district superintendents announced a plan to examine their assessment systems, ensure that assessments are high-quality and cut back testing that doesn't meet that bar or is redundant. I welcome that important step.

Parents have a right to know how much their children are learning; teachers, schools and districts need to know how students are progressing; and policymakers must know where students are excelling, improving and struggling. A focus on measuring student learning has had real benefits, especially for our most vulnerable students, ensuring that they are being held to the same rigorous standards as their well-off peers and shining a light on achievement gaps.

However, many have expressed concern about low-quality and redundant tests. And in some places, tests - and preparation for them - dominate the calendar and culture of schools, causing undue stress.

Policymakers at every level bear responsibility here - and that includes me and my department.

We will support state and district leaders in taking on this issue and provide technical assistance to those who seek it.

To be clear: I strongly believe in using high-quality assessments, including annual tests, as one (but only one) part of how adults improve instruction and hold themselves responsible for students' progress. With my own kids, I know parent-teacher conferences, grades and other feedback round out the picture of whether they're on track.

After a generation of watching other nations surpass ours educationally, the United States is putting the building blocks in place for schools that will once again lead the world. But for this effort to pay off, political leaders must be both strong and flexible in support of the nation's educators. America's schools are changing because our world is changing. Success in today's world requires critical thinking, adaptability, collaboration, problem solving and creativity - skills that go beyond the basics for which schools were designed in the past. But in recent decades, other countries have retooled their schools faster than we have.

We must do better. A great education isn't just what every parent wants for his or her child; it's a necessity for security in a globally competitive economy.

The good news is that, thanks to the hard work of educators, students and communities, America's schools have made historic achievements in recent years. The U.S. high school graduation rate is at an all-time high, and the places most committed to bold change have made major progress on the nation's report card. Since 2000, high school dropout rates have been cut in half for Hispanic students and more than a third for African Americans. College enrollment by black and Hispanic students has surged.

Perhaps even more important, educators are taking fundamental steps to help reclaim the United States' leadership in education. Throughout the country, students are being taught to higher standards, by teachers empowered to be creative and to teach critical thinking skills. Last year, nearly 30 states, led by both Republicans and Democrats, increased funding for early learning. Yet change this big is always hard, and political leaders - myself included - must provide support and make course corrections where needed. We are asking a great deal of our educators and students. Despite their hard work, and a growing embrace of many of these changes, one topic - standardized testing - sometimes diverts energy from this ambitious set of changes.

Fortunately, states and districts are taking on this challenge - including places such as Rhode Island and New York state; St. Paul, Minn.; Nashville; and the District, where leaders are already taking actions to limit testing. As they and others move forward, I look forward to highlighting progress others can learn from.

States are also leading the way on improving test quality, building assessments that move beyond

bubble tests and measure critical thinking skills and writing; the Education Department has provided \$360 million to two consortia of states to support that work. And to reduce stress on teachers during this year of transition, my department in August offered states new flexibility on connecting teacher evaluation to test results.

It's vital that political leaders stand behind changes that will prepare our young people for success in the real world - changes that educators have worked so hard to get underway. We must also stand behind states that have increased standards for learning, and where adults are holding themselves responsible for the progress of all students. We must stand strong for responsible and equitable school funding. We must stand strong for making both preschool and college accessible to all.

And we must stand strong in the knowledge - not the belief but the knowledge - that great schools make a difference in the lives of all children.

The writer is U.S. secretary of education.

A CAMPAIGN WITH NO ANSWERS (WP)

By Ruth Marcus

Washington Post, October 19, 2014

The closing days of a closely fought election rarely offer uplifting moments, but the 2014 season has been particularly dreary, nearly devoid of content and high on unedifying spectacle.

Perhaps the iconic moment came when former Florida governor Charlie Crist (D) faced an empty lectern for seven minutes while his Republican opponent, Gov. Rick Scott, sulked over Crist's insistence that he have a cooling fan at his stand. Seriously, seven minutes. At which point Scott blinked, and the debate that voters deserved could finally start.

But behavior that disrespects voters knows no partisan label. Consider Kentucky Democrat Alison Lundergan Grimes's steadfast refusal to say whether she voted for President Obama.

Grimes, seeking to unseat Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R), has obviously judged that the cost of ducking this reasonable question is less than the damage of offering an answer that would, presumably, align her with the president.

This strikes me as the wrong calculation: The voters who would be alienated by a straightforward answer are probably already lost to Grimes, but I can imagine wavering voters being turned off by her dodginess.

Even worse is Grimes's sanctimonious effort to wrap her evasiveness in patriotic bunting, the "sanctity of the ballot box" and the privacy protections for voters enshrined in the state Constitution.

"This is a matter of principle," Grimes said in a debate Monday. "I'm not going to compromise a constitutional right provided here in Kentucky in order to curry favor on one or the other side or for members of the media."

Spare me. Sure, the average citizen has every right to tell reporters to buzz off when asked how they cast their vote. But a politician whose job entails campaigning for politicians of her party? Who was an Obama delegate to the national convention? Who was all too happy to disclose the fact of her vote for Hillary Clinton during the 2008 Democratic primaries?

In the same category of behavior disrespectful to voters, I'd put the refusal of Kansas Senate candidate Greg Orman to tell the people of his state which party he supports. Orman, an independent hoping to unseat Sen. Pat Roberts (R), has said he would caucus with whichever party turns out to hold the majority.

Indeed, Orman manages to out-Grimes Grimes: While she won't say who she voted for in private, he doesn't want to talk about who he'll vote with in public.

Asked recently whether he owed the voters of Kansas an answer about which party he'd support, Orman non-answered, "I sort of reject the premise of that question. . . . I think it's an opportunity for Kansas to define the agenda in the United States Senate."

This is "Let's Make a Deal" politics, with voters relegated to guessing what's behind door No. 3.

And Orman isn't the only Monty Hall running. In South Dakota, former Republican senator Larry Pressler, running as an independent for his old job, is similarly coy. He has announced that "I don't agree with Obama on very many things" and told the Hill newspaper he would be a "friend of Obama" in the Senate and had voted for the president twice.

I'm fine with running for office as an independent - there's enough orthodoxy in both parties to

make your head explode - but that's different than running as a cipher. The ideological chasm between the two parties has grown so large that someone with fixed political convictions - other than that he should wield maximum influence - can't plausibly waver between the two. Not that the major-party candidates are covering themselves with glory this cycle. The Republican strategy boils down to yoking your Democratic opponent as tightly as possible to Obama. The champion may be North Carolina's Thom Tillis, who managed, in the course of an hour-long debate with Sen. Kay Hagan, to cram in 10 references to her voting with Obama 96 percent of the time.

In a debate last week in Louisiana, Republican Bill Cassidy said of Sen. Mary Landrieu (D), "She represents Barack Obama. I represent you."

The Democratic response is essentially: Barack who? Thus Landrieu's retort: "While President Obama is not on the ballot, the future of Louisiana is."

Perhaps campaigns are like childbirth: There is a natural human tendency to forget the nonsense (in the case of elections) or the pain (in the case of both elections and childbirth). But this one may take longer than the usual two years to forget.

Read more from Ruth Marcus's archive, follow her on Twitter or subscribe to her updates on Facebook.

IN COLORADO, OVERHEATED RHETORIC FROM 'MARK UTERUS' (WP)

By George F. Will

Washington Post, October 19, 2014

DENVER

One of the wonders of this political moment is feminist contentment about the infantilization of women in the name of progressive politics. Government, encouraging academic administrations to micromanage campus sexual interactions, now assumes that, absent a script, women cannot cope. And the Democrats' trope about the Republicans' "war on women" clearly assumes that women are civic illiterates.

Access to contraception has been a constitutional right for 49 years (*Griswold v. Connecticut*, 1965). The judiciary has controlled abortion policy for 41 years (*Roe v. Wade*, 1973). Yet the Democratic Party thinks women can be panicked into voting about mythical menaces to these things.

One Democrat whose gallantry toward women is monomaniacal, Sen. Mark Udall (Colo.), is now uncomfortably known here as "Mark Uterus." He is seeking a second term by running such a relentlessly gynecological campaign that the *Denver Post*, in endorsing his opponent, Rep. Cory Gardner, denounced the "shocking amount of energy and money" Udall has devoted to saying that Gardner favors banning birth control.

Actually, Gardner favors over-the-counter sales of oral contraceptives. In addition to being common sense, Gardner's proposal is his way of making amends for formerly advocating a state constitutional "personhood" amendment (it is again on the ballot this year and will be decisively rejected for a third time) and for endorsing similar federal legislation that has zero chance of passage. By defining personhood as beginning at conception, these measures might preclude birth control technologies that prevent implantation in the uterus of a fertilized egg. On this slender reed, Udall leans his overheated accusations that Gardner is bent on "trampling on women's rights," is on a "crusade" for "eliminating" reproductive freedoms and would "outlaw birth control." Gardner, 40, cherubic and ebullient, is a human sunbeam whose unshakable cheerfulness is disconcertingly authentic as he exclaims to the waiter at breakfast, "Thank you for your work this morning!" A fifth-generation Coloradoan who lives in a prairie town in a house once owned by his great-grandparents, Gardner is amused by an anomaly: "Udall looks like the Republican in this race - dour and angry."

When Gardner ran an ad saying Udall is "a real nice guy" but too much a creature of Washington to change it (Udall's father, an Arizona congressman, ran for president; Udall's uncle was an Arizona congressman and interior secretary; Udall's cousin is a senator from New Mexico), Udall, in high synthetic dudgeon, called the ad a reprehensible attack on his family. Which elicited this puckish headline in the *Washington Examiner*: "Cory Gardner calls Mark Udall 'nice guy'; Democrats want ad pulled."

In losing Colorado's 2010 Senate race, the Republican candidate carried men by 14 points but lost

women by 17. This 31-point gap will not be replicated this year. In a recent Fox News poll, Gardner trailed Udall among women by just 5 points while leading among men by 17. Independents favored Gardner by 15 points.

Barack Obama accepted the 2008 Democratic nomination here in a football stadium decorated with faux neoclassical columns made of plywood. He excoriated John McCain for having "voted with George Bush 90 percent of the time." Ask Gardner to pass the salt and he will say: "Udall has supported Obama 99 percent of the time." The world turns.

So does Gardner. Ross Kaminsky, a radio host here, writes:

"Gardner tells a personal story. 'I was visiting a high school in Kit Carson, Colorado, when a young woman came up to me asking about in-state tuition for non-citizens. 'I'm graduating at the top of my high school class, but my parents brought me here illegally when I was 5 years old and without in-state tuition I can't afford college,' she told me.' Gardner's answer - that for several reasons this really needed to be dealt with as part of broader immigration reform - left him feeling unsatisfied even though it accurately represented his view. He continues: 'Five years later, I went back to Kit Carson and sat down in a little restaurant for a quick bite. And who do you think ended up serving me? The same girl who five years earlier was the valedictorian of her high school.' Gardner's conclusion . . . is that this cannot be the best outcome for the girl, for her family, or for the state of Colorado."

In order to change your mind, you have to have one. The "war on women" incantation is mindless - a substitute for thought. This is surely obvious to thinking women, including one Gardner knows in Kit Carson.

THE NASTY POLITICIZATION OF EBOLA (WP)

By Dana Milbank

Washington Post, October 19, 2014

Francis Collins, director of the National Institutes of Health, administered a dose of truth to political Washington this week.

For this honest service, Collins was pilloried.

In an interview published Sunday night, Collins shared with the Huffington Post's Sam Stein his belief that, if not for recent federal spending cuts, "we probably would have had a vaccine in time for this" Ebola outbreak.

This should not be controversial. His conjecture was based on cold budgeting facts. NIH funding between fiscal year 2010 and fiscal year 2014 had dropped 10 percent in real dollars - and vaccine research took a proportionate hit. Research on an Ebola vaccine, at \$37 million in 2010, was halved to \$18 million in 2014.

Officials at the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Disease report that budget cuts forced them to shelve 14 Ebola-related grants, roughly a quarter of the total. NIH was forced to prioritize spending to react to the most pressing current threats rather than potential ones, and because there was little Ebola activity at the time, shifting money to Ebola from, say, cancer or Alzheimer's research wasn't a viable possibility.

With Ebola vaccines now entering clinical trials, it's not much of a stretch to conclude that, with those extra research dollars, vaccines would now be on the market - potentially saving thousands of lives in Africa and avoiding panic in the United States.

Yet conservatives pounced. Commentator Michelle Malkin's Web site, Twitchy, called Collins a "fool" (this fool previously led the mapping of the human genome) and assembled tweets saying the Ebola vaccine could have been paid for with money spent on President Obama's vacations or the White House vegetable garden, among other things.

Republican candidates have begun making a campaign issue of waste at NIH and its sister agency, the Centers for Disease Control. "Have you seen what the NIH spends money on?" Sen. Rand Paul (R-Ky.) asked, mocking Collins's claim at a rally I attended Wednesday. "One hundred seventeen thousand dollars spent to determine that most monkeys are right handed, and like to throw poop with their right hand, apparently. Two-point-four million of the NIH dollars was spent on origami condoms."

The senator, who then proposed more budget cuts, ought to update his examples. The right-handed monkey study? Done between 1992 and 1997. Origami condoms? The new device worn by women could protect millions, particularly in Africa, from AIDS. But perhaps Paul, an

ophthalmologist, thinks that's frivolous.

Collins, an evangelical Christian, was aghast that his remarks "turned into this really nasty political outcome that has resulted in attacks on NIH," he told me Thursday. "People are saying I'm overstating the circumstances, which I don't think I am."

Collins said he was equally appalled by an ad this week by the liberal Agenda Project Action Fund that juxtaposes Republicans saying the word "cut" with images of Ebola carnage. "Republican Cuts Kill," it concludes.

Collins sees his beloved NIH - for decades the beneficiary of broad bipartisan support - falling into the gaping maw of politics that has consumed most everything else. "I've tried so hard in the 21 years I've been at NIH," he said, "to keep medical research from becoming a partisan issue." Even hardcore libertarians tend to agree that medical research and public health, like national defense, are among the few things that should be a federal responsibility. Eric Cantor, the recently deposed House majority leader, made a big push for government funding of medical research. But while NIH funding grew steadily over the years, it leveled off at \$28 billion in 2004 and was at \$29.3 billion in 2013. When you factor in medical inflation, NIH's purchasing power is down 23 percent over that period.

Collins admits it's a mistake to think "throwing money at a medical problem automatically results in breakthroughs." But there are a few major research projects on the cusp of success that could bring financial benefits far beyond the cost - much as the U.S. government's \$3.8 billion initial investment in Collins's Human Genome Project has fueled new medical industries and economic growth of as much as \$1 trillion.

Now, NIH-funded researchers are "a few years away," Collins said, from a universal flu vaccine that could protect people against virtually all strains - even pandemics - without the need for annual shots. Yearly flu epidemics suck an estimated \$87 billion out of the U.S. economy and claim tens of thousands of lives; a pandemic strain could be much worse.

Who, of any political philosophy, would say it's not worth \$121 million - and more - for a universal flu vaccine?

Who would say, given the economic catastrophe that an Ebola outbreak could cause, that spending tens of millions more for an Ebola vaccine is wasteful?

Only a fool.

THE WEST IS PAYING DEARLY FOR COZYING UP TO RUSSIA OVER 25 YEARS (WP)

By Anne Applebaum

Washington Post, October 18, 2014

Looking back over the past quarter-century, it isn't easy to name a Western policy that can truly be described as a success. The impact of Western development aid is debatable. Western interventions in the Middle East have been disastrous.

But one Western policy stands out as a phenomenal success, particularly when measured against the low expectations with which it began: the integration of Central Europe and the Baltic States into the European Union and NATO. Thanks to this double project, more than 90 million people have enjoyed relative safety and relative prosperity for more than two decades in a region whose historic instability helped launch two world wars.

These two "expansions," which were parallel but not identical (some countries are members of one organization but not the other), were transformative because they were not direct leaps, as the word "expansion" implies, but slow negotiations. Before joining NATO, each country had to establish civilian control of its army. Before joining the European Union, each adopted laws on trade, judiciary, human rights. As a result, they became democracies. This was "democracy promotion" working as it never has before or since.

But times change, and the miraculous transformation of a historically unstable region became a humdrum reality. Instead of celebrating this achievement on the 25th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall, it is now fashionable to opine that this expansion, and of NATO in particular, was mistaken. This project is incorrectly "remembered" as the result of American "triumphalism" that somehow humiliated Russia by bringing Western institutions into its rickety neighborhood. This thesis is usually based on revisionist history promoted by the current Russian regime - and it is wrong.

For the record: No treaties prohibiting NATO expansion were ever signed with Russia. No

promises were broken. Nor did the impetus for NATO expansion come from a "triumphalist" Washington. On the contrary, Poland's first efforts to apply in 1992 were rebuffed. I well remember the angry reaction of the U.S. ambassador to Warsaw at the time. But Poland and others persisted, precisely because they were already seeing signs of the Russian revanchism to come. When the slow, cautious expansion eventually took place, constant efforts were made to reassure Russia. No NATO bases were placed in the new member states, and until 2013 no exercises were conducted there. A Russia-NATO agreement in 1997 promised no movement of nuclear installations. A NATO-Russia Council was set up in 2002. In response to Russian objections, Ukraine and Georgia were, in fact, denied NATO membership plans in 2008. Meanwhile, not only was Russia not "humiliated" during this era, it was given de facto "great power" status, along with the Soviet seat on the U.N. Security Council and Soviet embassies. Russia also received Soviet nuclear weapons, some transferred from Ukraine in 1994 in exchange for Russian recognition of Ukraine's borders. Presidents Clinton and Bush both treated their Russian counterparts as fellow "great power" leaders and invited them to join the Group of Eight - although Russia, neither a large economy nor a democracy, did not qualify. During this period, Russia, unlike Central Europe, never sought to transform itself along European lines. Instead, former KGB officers with a clearly expressed allegiance to the Soviet system took over the state in league with organized crime, seeking to prevent the formation of democratic institutions at home and to undermine them abroad. For the past decade, this kleptocratic clique has also sought to re-create an empire, using everything from cyberattacks on Estonia to military invasions of Georgia and now Ukraine, in open violation of that 1994 agreement - exactly as the Central Europeans feared.

Once we remember what actually happened over the past two decades, as opposed to accepting the Russian regime's version, our own mistakes look different. In 1991, Russia was no longer a great power in either population or economic terms. So why didn't we recognize reality, reform the United Nations and give a Security Council seat to India, Japan or others? Russia did not transform itself along European lines. Why did we keep pretending that it had? Eventually, our use of the word "democracy" to describe the Russian political system discredited the word in Russia itself.

The crisis in Ukraine, and the prospect of a further crisis in NATO itself, is not the result of our triumphalism but of our failure to react to Russia's aggressive rhetoric and its military spending. Why didn't we move NATO bases eastward a decade ago? Our failure to do so has now led to a terrifying plunge of confidence in Central Europe. Countries once eager to contribute to the alliance are now afraid. A string of Russian provocations unnerve the Baltic region: the buzzing of Swedish airspace, the kidnapping of an Estonian security officer.

Our mistake was not to humiliate Russia but to underrate Russia's revanchist, revisionist, disruptive potential. If the only real Western achievement of the past quarter-century is now under threat, that's because we have failed to ensure that NATO continues to do in Europe what it was always meant to do: deter. Deterrence is not an aggressive policy; it is a defensive policy. But in order to work, deterrence has to be real. It requires investment, consolidation and support from all of the West, and especially the United States. I'm happy to blame American triumphalism for many things, but in Europe I wish there had been more of it.

ISLAMIC STATE'S EVIL HIGHLIGHTS THE COMPASSION OF ITS VICTIMS (WP)

By Stephanie Saldaña

Washington Post, October 19, 2014

In the past two months, the world has watched helplessly as the Islamic State released four videos of foreign captives being beheaded in Syria. Much has been said about what we can learn about evil from these videos. Not enough has been said about what we can learn about good. The first video, of James Foley's beheading, appeared Aug. 19. The images were ubiquitous in newspapers and on social media. Foley, dressed in an orange jumpsuit, was on his knees. A masked man held a knife to Foley's throat. On recordings, we heard the executioner speak in a British accent, warning that Steven Sotloff, an American freelance journalist, would be next. More videos followed. Sotloff was murdered in September. Then David Haines, followed by Alan Henning. Though the Islamic State had long been carrying out public executions, the Internet expanded "public" to a horrifying new dimension. Now a single video could terrify millions, and

there was evidence the tactic was working: In a recent poll, 94 percent of Americans said that they had heard about the beheadings.

Only with the latest video, showing the death of Henning and the appearance of the 26-year-old American aid worker Abdul-Rahman Kassig as the next potential victim, did I realize the message of terror was backfiring. These videos weren't making me afraid. They were giving me hope.

The evil, so potent in the first video, remained static. With each new version, we learned nothing new about it. The man, now known to the world as "Jihadi John," looked the same. The orange jumpsuit remained the same, as did the knife, the method of killing, the desert. That English accent designed to chill us.

But each time the good was different. We learned that Foley, in addition to being a journalist, was a devout Catholic who once taught inner-city kids. In Syria, he raised money to buy an ambulance for a hospital. His kindness did not stop while he was in captivity, where he shared blankets and food rations. In a letter home, he urged his grandmother to take her medicine.

We met Sotloff and read his article on desperate civilians in Aleppo who could not afford bread or fuel. It opened with a 12-year-old boy chopping wood for his family, an incident Sotloff captured because he had learned to speak the boy's native language - Arabic. Testimonies emerged that Sotloff, who was Jewish and the grandson of Holocaust survivors, fasted on Yom Kippur in captivity.

With Haines, we met a humanitarian worker supplying tents and food to refugees. With Henning, we were introduced to a British taxi driver who took unpaid leave to deliver aid with his Muslim friends. Many media outlets stopped showing images from the videos. Instead, we saw Henning's smiling face as he held a Syrian child in his arms.

So when Kassig - known as Peter to his friends - appeared as next in line to die, we were not surprised to learn that he is remarkable. A former Army Ranger, he founded his aid organization on a shoestring budget, smuggling supplies across the Syrian border. He used his first-aid training to teach Syrians to heal wounds. He wrote to his parents from captivity: "If I do die, I figure that at least you and I can seek refuge and comfort in knowing that I went out as a result of trying to alleviate suffering and helping those in need."

We have always known that such heroes exist: We just don't often find them in the news. They are journalists who bear witness to suffering, even as they fall under shelling. They are aid workers who deliver flour across checkpoints. They join other unknown heroes - parents trying to feed their kids in wartime, teachers trying to hold classes. They stop at nothing: If there is no ambulance, they buy one; no doctor, they train one; no voice, they become one. They are hope, in places where we have long since ceased to believe hope is possible.

We have no power over whether the Islamic State will release more videos. But we can control what we choose to learn from them. Let them be reminders not of how much evil is in the world but of how much good.

LIBERTY, EQUALITY AREN'T MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE (WP)

By Danielle Allen

Washington Post, October 19, 2014

Our country is in trouble. Congress's approval rating hovers near its lowest level since Gallup polling began, social protest rates are as high as they've been since the 1960s and the least among us - poor African Americans - are worse off than a decade ago. These are indicators of democracy running off the rails. To them one might add the stagnation of earnings for most Americans and a new regime of surveillance, wedded to ever-extending bureaucratic regulation. One cause of our trouble is that we have come to believe that liberty and equality are in conflict, and this affects our policy debates. This misunderstanding began in reaction to Marx, took hold during the Cold War and found new strength in today's libertarianism. But it's wrong - and until we return to understanding how liberty and equality reinforce each other, we're not going to solve our problems.

For millennia, political thinkers understood equality and liberty as concepts that provided mutual support. The ancient Athenians, who invented formal democracy, also conjured up the concepts of "equality before the law" and "an equal right to speak." They opened political participation to all men regardless of economic status, while naming naval vessels things such as Eleutheria, or "Freedom." The republican citizenry of ancient Rome conducted its politics under the banner of

"equal liberty" and celebrated a mixed constitution that, as Cicero wrote, had "enough power in the magistracies, enough authority in the advice given by leading citizens, and enough liberty in the people." For a time, that mixed constitution brought "equality," "something free men are hardly able to do without for very long," as he put it. The United States' founding similarly drew liberty and equality together. In Abraham Lincoln's formulation, the new nation was "conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal."

The obvious flies in the nectar - slavery and patriarchy - actually reinforce these conceptual points. Those who were not equal were not free and vice versa.

Among citizen men, in Athens, Rome and America, equality and liberty were concepts understood to support and sustain each other. Bonds of political and social equality among the citizens were necessary to forge institutions that would protect each individually from domination by the others and all together from domination by external powers.

Up through the early 19th century, the search for definitions of popular government and the welfare of the people (or *salus populi*, to quote Cicero and Locke) yielded a diversity of approaches to equality. The ancient Athenians, for instance, and the early modern Americans, focused on political and social equality. The French cared about both of those but also pursued equalizing economic policies. There was, in short, a centuries-long fluidity of analysis around the concepts of liberty and equality - but also a basic orientation toward their fundamental harmony. This disappeared with the rise of communism. Marx's famous words, "A spectre is haunting Europe," introduced an age that assimilated the belief that liberty and equality stand opposed. That age is with us still in the form of contemporary libertarianism.

In the "Communist Manifesto" of 1848 Marx wrote: "The proletariat will use its political supremacy to wrest, by degrees, all capital from the bourgeoisie, to centralize all instruments of production in the hands of the state . . . Of course, in the beginning this cannot be effected except by means of despotic inroads on the rights of property and on the conditions of bourgeois production." Over half a century, the question of the meaning of equality and its connection to liberty came to turn entirely around a definition understood to require the equalization of property through forceful re-appropriation.

In this country, as the argument against socialism and communism gathered force, the battle was explicitly cast as a contest between equality and liberty by thinkers such as William Graham Sumner, the late 19th-century chair of political economy at Yale University. He wrote in an argument against socialism: "Let it be understood that we cannot go outside of this alternative: liberty, inequality, survival of the fittest; not-liberty, equality, survival of the unfittest."

By the Cold War, both communists and libertarians structured their ideas, to an important degree, around the tenet that there is "an Eternal Conflict" between liberty and equality, to quote the title of a 1960 article from the *Freeman*, a publication of the Foundation for Economic Education. Iconic thinkers on the right adopted the theme and built economic theories around it: Ludwig von Mises, Friedrich Hayek and Milton Friedman. But liberals and thinkers on the left - Isaiah Berlin, John Rawls and Ronald Dworkin - also assumed a basic opposition between liberty and equality, even if they sought to undo it.

The stakes of this conceptual error are significant. We might, for instance, view our partisan gridlock as the sad result of a conceptual error applied over long duration. The Democratic Party, which now wears the mantle of equality - if any party does - thinks it cannot in a full-throated way befriend liberty. The Republican Party, which wants to style itself the party of liberty, thinks it can give no quarter to equality. But these ideals belong together like hand and glove. If the command economy was an extreme political form, so too is the libertarian counter-vision.

It's now 25 years since the Berlin Wall fell - long past time, in other words, to dismantle the second wall established by a putative opposition between liberty and equality. We are overdue for a return to the task of ascertaining how those two concepts work in tandem, and what institutional forms can best sustain them as the twinned ideals that they are.

Our own political tradition gives us the resources for doing that, beginning with the Declaration of Independence. I would urge us all to renew our education there, diving afresh into the meaning of equality, and discovering just how it can live harmoniously with liberty.

WILMINGTON NEWS JOURNAL STORIES:

DOWNSTATE DELAWARE'S HIDDEN HEROIN EPIDEMIC (WILNJ)

By Adam Taylor

Wilmington (DE) News Journal, October 19, 2014

Southern Delaware has a bigger heroin problem than does its larger neighbor to the north, state and local police say. But when an addict hits bottom here, he or she could be offered a tent rather than a bed in a halfway house.

Treatment services are sparse, requiring addicts hitch rides or drive 30 miles to counseling sessions and support group meetings. There are no state-funded detox or inpatient rehabs downstate, as there are in New Castle County. And experts say there is a culture of denial among residents in Kent and Sussex counties about the widespread abuse of heroin.

"A lot of it has to do with the rural culture in which people don't reach beyond their inner circles or families to find ways to solve their problems," says Joseph Connor, director of the Addictions Coalition of Delaware. "They solve them internally."

William Bethard is a lifelong Sussex County resident who entered the vortex of opiate abuse at 18 when he got hooked on prescription-opiate Percocet pills. He snorted his first bag of heroin on the Fourth of July three or four years ago (he can't remember which) while working in the kitchen of an Italian restaurant in Rehoboth Beach.

Bethard went outside, higher than he'd ever gotten on pills, and watched the fireworks display. He had never been happier.

But his life quickly slid toward the abyss. He began burglarizing homes to feed his habit. He lived in a rundown hotel in Rehoboth, even slept in the woods behind the Rehoboth Kmart.

He lost his mother's trust after stealing her boyfriend's credit card to buy Christmas presents for his drug dealer's family - a \$2,000 bill for a flat-screen TV, a bicycle and an X-box. The dealer traded an equal amount of heroin.

In September, the 24-year-old had strung together a nine-month stint of staying clean by spending 120 days in Sussex County Correctional Institution and an additional 150 days in court-mandated rehab in New Castle County.

Once that was done, though, he had nowhere to go.

24 year-old William Bethard tells a story of a road to the bottom and the struggles to get clean sober from a heroin addiction in Sussex County.

Ten days later Bethard walked into the A.C.E. Center, a resource facility in Seaford for Sussex County residents who are down on their luck for a variety of reasons. Bethard thought he might get a referral to a halfway house, maybe a voucher for a hotel.

He was taken aback by the center's approach for handling the typical homeless person's needs: a tent and a stump speech from Executive Director Jim Martin about finding a thick patch of woods outside the town limits where he wouldn't be roused by the police.

"That's how we do it in Sussex County," said Martin, noting that the center often holds events at which tents for the homeless are donated. "We work with what we have and engage in direct action when we have to help people."

Fortunately for Bethard, a group of Christian outreach volunteers led by John Rittenhouse walked into the A.C.E. Center before Martin handed over the tent. Rittenhouse started the group Shift Destiny because, after his son became a heroin addict and was sentenced to prison for a series of drug crimes, he wanted to help others avoid his boy's fate.

"I learned that I can't help my son - only he can do that," Rittenhouse said. "But I can try to help another father's son."

Rittenhouse's son, from Seaford, is a lot like Bethard. He turns 25 today, is in prison for burglary and other charges and is scheduled to soon enter Gateway Foundation, the same Delaware City rehab Bethard went to.

The Shift Destiny volunteers allowed Bethard to stay in their homes, and their charity allowed him a safe place to stay when he was in the fragile stages of early recovery.

Bethard later arranged to stay with a cousin in Lewes, and that's where he is today - working on a family farm and attending three 12-step meetings a week. He has been free from heroin for nearly 10 months.

"I got tired of the monotony of addiction," he said. "I just felt like I was always under it's thumb. Today I feel good. I'm finally optimistic about my future."

John Rittenhouse, of Seaford, has found help in dealing with his son's heroin addiction through his work with Shift Destiny church. His son is currently serving prison time for drug related crimes.

Starts in WilmingtonPolice calls rise rapidly in Kent and Sussex

Much of the heroin in Kent and Sussex counties comes from Wilmington, Delaware State Police spokesman Paul Shavack said. A downstate addict in Kent and Sussex counties has to pay \$10 to \$15 for a single bag that costs, on average, \$5 to \$10 in New Castle County, he said.

Bethard said a lot of his contacts, which he described as "a little gang, like a batch of ruffians," used to make the run to Wilmington to buy heroin and re-sell it in Sussex County.

He said the lack of visible drug activity downstate is an illusion.

"The only difference between Wilmington and down here is we're spread apart a little bit," he said.

"The same amount of heroin is here. We just don't have a bunch of corners you can stand on.

Everyone just sits in their cars instead."

"The only difference between Wilmington and down here is we're spread apart a little bit. The same amount of heroin is here. We just don't have a bunch of corners you can stand on. Everyone just sits in their cars instead."

William Bethard, 24, who used to make the run to Wilmington to buy heroin and re-sell it in Sussex County

Responses by police departments throughout the state for heroin-related activities exploded in Kent and Sussex counties in 2012 because opiate addicts switched to heroin when authorities cracked down on Percocet and Oxycontin, making those drugs too expensive.

From 2012 to 2013, state police say, increases in police responses were higher downstate than upstate. Departments responded to 125 percent more heroin calls in Kent County and 70 percent more in Sussex in that time period. The jump in New Castle County was 56 percent.

As of Oct. 1, the amount of responses in 2014 in Sussex County have already exceeded 2013's total, Shavack said. Ocean View Police Chief Kenneth McLaughlin said he's not surprised.

"I saw crack cocaine blow through our small, rural communities in the '80s and how incredibly widespread and damaging it was," McLaughlin said. "Eventually it waned, but I'm not seeing the same waning trend with heroin. It seems like with each passing day, it's getting stronger."

Earlier this month, a Selbyville-area mother was arrested after her 4-year-old daughter took 249 bags of heroin to a day care center and started handing it out, thinking they were packets of candy.

"Heroin is everywhere in this area, from the swamp to the sea," Selbyville Police Chief W. Scott Collins said.

Lacking servicesDownstate detox coming

Forty-one percent of overdose deaths in Delaware from all substances, including alcohol, have taken place in Kent and Sussex counties this year, according to state statistics.

Pauline Powell of Lewes started an Attack Addiction chapter in Sussex County because her 36-year-old son has struggled with heroin and other drugs since he was a teenager. Today he's buying Suboxone on the street - a drug supposed to help addicts detox from opiates, but is often abused.

Powell says Sussex County desperately needs a detox center and an inpatient rehab so residents don't have to go upstate for treatment.

"Not only more services, but more choices are needed," she said.

A downstate detox is on the way, Delaware Health and Social Services Secretary Rita Landgraf said. She hopes it will be open in January and wants it to be near the Kent-Sussex line to serve both counties. The 16-bed facility would allow addicts to stay for several days, and would also have more beds for 23-hour observations to assess treatment needs.

Connections Community Support Programs has been awarded the contract to run the detox and is looking for a site now, company CEO Cathy McKay said.

Connections has downstate facilities - in Smyrna, Dover, Millsboro and Seaford - that offer medication-assisted and outpatient treatments. Because of the exploding demand from addicts trying to get off heroin, Connections may expand those services, so she sees the need for a detox. In the past three months, Connections' Millsboro facility admitted 144 new clients. They get 10 new referrals a day. While Connections used to mostly serve a mix of people with problems with alcohol, cocaine or methamphetamine, now most of the clients are heroin addicts.

"We could have admitted 144 more if we had the capacity," McKay said. "There was a belief when

we started that facility three years ago that there was less of a problem there than other places, but that has turned out not to be true. There has been a real increase in heroin addiction that started from prescription opioid addiction."

At Gaudenzia on West 10th Street in Wilmington, half the clients seeking rehab are from downstate, the company's Division Director Steve Blank said. The facility has 16 beds for young adults who get inpatient drug and alcohol treatment for up to six months. There are another 16 beds that are used for people who have completed treatment and are waiting for transitional housing opportunities to open up or for those who are waiting for a bed at a rehab to become available.

About 55 people have been admitted into the facility this year, Blank said. Seventy-five percent have successfully completed treatment. Of those, 95 percent leave Gaudenzia with a job lined up. Many of those jobs are in New Castle County, Blank said.

"Because there isn't a lot offered [downstate] and there are more resources upstate, most of the people who come to us from Kent and Sussex counties wind up staying in the Wilmington area," he said.

Sussex County has felt the impact with the rise of heroin entering the illegal drug markets of small rural communities. Law enforcement, treatment center and addicts all struggle to overcome the drugs ramification on society.

Barriers for addicts Stigma and even religious beliefs

Powell said she hopes the Attack Addiction chapter will help increase awareness of the heroin problem, as well as to destigmatize the problem so more addicts will seek help.

But several barriers exist that make those goals more difficult than in New Castle County, she said.

Mandell Much, clinical director of Aquila, a treatment center for adolescents in Georgetown, said the culture of self-reliance makes addictions treatment difficult.

"Many families think they'll just figure it out, manage it or live with it," Much said. "They don't say, 'We need help.'"

Addictions Coalition's Connor, a 30-year Sussex County resident, said some residents' religious beliefs also can get in the way of addicts getting well.

"Certain sectarian organizations don't ascribe to treatment," Connor said. "Having faith and spirituality is helpful, but addiction can't just be prayed away."

Transportation issue 90-minute one-way trips

There are many hard-core heroin addicts in Sussex County who don't drive, which makes it tough to get treatment if they decide to get clean, Connor said.

"Effective public transportation in Sussex County is minimal at best," he said.

That's why Martin, the director of the A.C.E. Center, considers used bicycles to be as meaningful a donation as tents. "If you don't have a car in Sussex County, you're dead in the water," he said.

For some counselors at Aquila, that often means picking up their clients and bringing them back to Georgetown, Clinical Director April Lathbury said. A typical route has a counselor leaving the Georgetown office to pick up one client in Bethany Beach, another in Lewes, a third in Harbeson, then back to the office for a group session. The trip can take more than 90 minutes each way.

Counselor Julie Landis said some parents try to use distance traveled as a reason to forgo help for their children. If that happens, she does home visits.

"Life in Sussex County, you don't really blink about driving 20 minutes to go to the grocery store or the movies or anything like that," Landis said. "The parents will use that as an excuse sometimes to not engage in treatment. So having community-based treatment allows us to move past those excuses and be in the home and really address what the real issues are."

One 23-year-old Dagsboro woman who has been free from heroin for several months said she went to treatment in New Castle County because there are more Narcotics Anonymous Meetings to choose from. She stays in New Castle County from Friday night to Sunday afternoon, attending a week's worth of meetings in a weekend.

Kris Arway of Millsboro said her 23-year-old son had to go to Florida to stay clean for 60 days. The state of treatment is so bad in Sussex County that an employee at one treatment center encouraged her to buy Suboxone off the street until there was treatment space for her son.

"So that's what I did," she said.

Arway has been to both of Attack Addiction's Sussex chapter meetings. She hopes to help make a

difference before people like her son die from heroin overdoses.

"We have an opportunity to change the way addiction is addressed in southern Delaware, but we have to open our eyes down here," she said. "I miss my son's dry wit, his heart of gold, his contagious laugh. But I'm not naive. I know I might never see them again."

Reporters Esteban Parra and Sean O'Sullivan contributed to this story.

DELAWARE RAMP UP EBOLA PREPARATIONS (WILNJ)

By Jen Rini

Wilmington (DE) News Journal, October 19, 2014

Delaware has always crowed about being in the sweet spot of the East Coast, between Washington, D.C., and New York.

But when it comes to the deadly Ebola virus, that might not be a good thing - because so many people travel through Delaware in route to one city or the other.

That means Ebola could be traveling through the state, too. But Rita Landgraf, secretary of the Delaware Department of Health and Social Services, stopped short of saying the First State is likely to have an Ebola case.

"It's hard to predict. It's not like our hurricane," said Landgraf. "We have no precedent that has been in the United States relative to Ebola. We can't predict if it will hit or not."

With two Texas nurses infected with Ebola after being exposed to a patient there, Delaware hospitals and health care organizations are ramping up and fine-tuning plans for how to handle any suspected cases in the First State.

Christiana Care Hospital expects it would get only one or two patients as opposed to dozens - and none in the immediate future.

"We do have the window of time where we are really actively working on getting people trained so they can take care of patients," said Dr. Marci Drees, infection prevention officer and hospital epidemiologist.

Among the precautions taken at hospitals statewide:

- Beebe Healthcare already has put a test patient through the emergency room process to check readiness. "We didn't tell the staff," said Marcy Jack, vice president of quality, safety and risk management at Beebe Healthcare. "We had someone present [with symptoms] to see if the correct questions for detection were asked. We pretty much have an emergency notification tree so communication can happen quickly."

- Christiana Health Care System nurses and staff are screening patients at all emergency departments for travel histories if they show any symptoms consistent with Ebola, such as fever and stomach pains. Fewer than five were identified as worrisome. All had been to Africa, but only one had traveled to the affected regions. Each patient was taken out of the waiting room, put in a private room and evaluated by health care staff in basic protective equipment. Ebola was ruled out in each case.

Said Drees: "I would rather have 100 false alarms than any patient slip through."

- Bayhealth Kent General in Dover acted quickly when a Liberian child was admitted for possible exposure to the infectious disease Oct. 4. Ebola was almost immediately ruled out due to travel screening questions.

- New Castle County's Emergency Medical Services units always use protection procedures established for the HIV and AIDS epidemic, designed to prevent any contact with infected blood. Their teams use personal protective equipment, especially gloves, every day and sanitize ambulances with bleach. With the threat of Ebola, the unit's 911 communication centers are asking additional questions about travel history as they process calls, and staff are required to use extra precautions when inserting intravenous needles and collecting blood, said Larry Tan, chief of the unit.

After two healthcare workers in Texas contracted Ebola, paramedics in Delaware are taking extra precaution to deal with any possible infected patients. 10/17/14

While one Texas man has died from Ebola and two of his nurses have gotten sick, the United States is not in the throes of an epidemic like West Africa, where 4,500 people have died. The World Health Organization has predicted 10,000 new cases a week in the next month, and many of those will be outside West Africa because people move around so much in the modern world.

Public concern was heightened last week by stories about the conditions in which the Texas

nurses worked. They had to tape their protective garments closed while dealing with projectile vomiting and explosive diarrhea. Clothing and bedding soiled by human waste and body fluids piled up in a room. Health officials suspect the nurses were exposed when they took off their protective suits.

After that report surfaced, state and federal officials took action. President Obama named former Vice President Chief of Staff Ron Klain to coordinate the nation's response to Ebola.

And the state asked all Delaware health care organizations to use WHO guidelines, which include having health care workers supervised while putting on and taking off protective gear. While some Delaware hospitals did use the WHO method, others relied on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommendations suggested by the state in August - or older plans put in place for protection from HIV or the H1N1 swine flu virus.

"I know fear is out there," added Leslie Verucci, president of the Delaware Nurses Association, who compared the public fear to the panic that followed the number of HIV and AIDS cases increasing in the 1980s.

Verucci said hospitals need to ensure the safety of their health care workers when dealing with the violent symptoms of Ebola.

"I believe this opened everyone's eyes," Verucci said. "Someone who is felt to have not done anything wrong still was contaminated somehow."

Avoiding human error

The Ebola virus is spread person-to-person through direct contact with infected bodily fluids such as blood, urine, sweat, semen, breast milk and feces. Like HIV, Ebola can be spread through cuts, sexual intercourse or if infected bodily fluids get into a person's eyes, nose or mouth.

While the infection is not airborne, if an Ebola patient sneezes on someone and the fluid touches a person's eyes, nose or mouth, it can move through the mucus membranes to infect the person contaminated. The same is true if the saliva of a coughing Ebola patient moves through membranes of another person.

The virus can live outside the body for a couple of hours on a surface such as a countertop, but up to six days in fluid, such as blood. Household cleaners like bleach will kill it.

The threat of such infection, however, depends on many things - including the symptoms of the already infected person.

A fever is the first sign that a person is infectious, but that's also when the virus is least likely to be passed to someone else, said Dr. Karyl Rattay, director of the state's Division of Public Health. As the disease progresses to severe vomiting, diarrhea and hemorrhaging, the infection is more virulent, more present in the body and more likely to infect someone else if exposed.

It can take as little as two days before a person shows symptoms, or up to 21 days.

All state cases of Ebola will be tracked by the state Department of Health and Social Services in concert with the Division of Public Health, and Landgraf will provide alerts to health organizations and citizens. The Department of Health will work with the Delaware Emergency Management Agency and the Department of Safety and Homeland Security as it would with any emergency disaster planning, Landgraf said.

While isolating the infection is the first order of business, "we also want to communicate effectively so the public is able to protect themselves," Landgraf said. "But the last thing we want to do is enhance any kind of panic."

She said she has full confidence that area hospitals, including Nemours/Alfred I. duPont Hospital for Children, St. Francis, Nanticoke, Beebe, Christiana Care and Bayhealth, are ready.

"They are prepared to take patients," Landgraf said. "You have to plan for the worst and hope for the best ... I'm confident that we have a communication system with our health systems on an ongoing basis. If anything shifts, we will know that and we will act accordingly."

If a suspected patient is identified, the state's operational plan calls for Homeland Security to enforce isolation in hospitals as well as at any private locations, such as apartments. Security teams would be responsible for disposing of medical waste safely and effectively, she said. Hospitals already have waste disposal procedures in place that wouldn't be changed much if there was an Ebola patient. At Christiana, a third-party waste management company disposes of all hazardous waste, protective suits, equipment and cleaning supplies. With Ebola, Drees said cleaning staff will be hyper-vigilant in disinfecting and sanitizing the entire room, using as much protective equipment as possible.

Stringent precautions with blood samples also are in place. Patients who have returned from Africa routinely have blood tests for malaria and typhoid fever. Now, Drees said, lab workers and nurses will do as much testing as they can in a suspected patient's room. The samples would be kept separate from the general lab and packaged securely.

The state is identifying "alternative care sites" across Delaware that could be used in an overcapacity situation, but Landgraf wouldn't speak to the type of sites being considered or where they are. At a minimum, these sites would need to have ample water supply and cleanliness procedures.

In case of a patient overflow or a case that the CDC would want to monitor, the state has identified additional CDC-specified hospitals in the area. The closest would be the National Institutes of Health facility in Bethesda, Maryland, where one of the Texas nurses was sent.

A shared responsibility

Community health providers, from emergency transport to urgent and primary care clinics, are being kept informed by the state.

There's already a heightened sense of awareness, said Tan.

At Christiana Care, infectious disease specialists are working toward being able to separate an entire wing for suspected patients, said Drees.

Having designated areas for nurses to safely and securely put on and take off their protective equipment is central to the design. Minimizing the number of staff members in contact with the patient is also important. The hospital doesn't want students, trainees or ancillary staff in contact with an infected patient, she said, noting that isolation rooms could be configured quickly.

In some ways, Ebola is less concerning than other diseases out there, Drees said. But even in a first-world medical system, the death rate from Ebola is unknown, so vigilance in preparation and training is paramount.

Beebe has been fine-tuning standard infection protocols for more than a month, said Jack. That included sending a test patient through the system. The hospital expects to be able to track any patient suspected of Ebola, including which staff member the patient came in contact with, and what equipment was used in treatment.

The registration area will be the first line of defense at Delaware hospitals, with staff working desks inquiring about symptoms and travel to Ebola-affected regions. Any suspicious patient would be moved immediately into isolation. All emergency-room patients will receive notices on Ebola urging them to contact a staff member if they have any symptoms.

"Isolation for Ebola there doesn't need to be a specialized setup per se, just a private room," Jack said. The hospital can turn any private patient room into an isolation room, she said.

Nurses and other health care staff are also constantly undergoing in-person and online training regarding the personal protective suits as well as how to treat infected patients. Beebe uses the WHO guidelines that require a supervisor present when changing suits, and asks workers to double-glove when carrying a patient or handling infected bodily fluids.

"It is very difficult to put the equipment on and off in a manner that is not exposing. Taking off equipment is the highest risk," Jack said.

Beebe has on hand gloves that extend over isolation gowns, respirator masks, face shields, head covers and extra-long shoe coverings - and most of it has been there for two months. The hospital requires all staff who come in contact with a patient to don a suit. It also asks visitors to do that.

"We have definitely made sure we have enough supplies," Jack said. "As far as getting more supplies, that's a daily fluctuation."

Colin Faulkner, director of public safety for Kent County, said that the standard gowns, face shield and gloves the EMS units have are enough to protect staff when they come in contact with HIV, hepatitis C or influenza patients.

He's not sure how easy it's going to be to secure enough WHO-certified protection suits, which offer double the protection of a standard infection-control suit. Tan said that the WHO suits can cost \$12 each if bought in bulk. Standard protective suits are around \$7. Right now, New Castle EMS only has a couple of dozen. Faulkner says he's waiting on more suits from the state Division of Public Health.

"Ebola, it's a scary possibility. It's a very scary possibility," Faulkner said. "I'm sure that it wasn't expected in Dallas. If we don't do our jobs and we don't do it right, we risk affecting a lot of people. You have to treat it almost like a loaded gun, with a very light trigger."

WILMINGTON NEWS JOURNAL EDITORIALS:

DON'T WAIT FOR HEROIN-ADDICTION SOLUTIONS (WILNJ)

Wilmington (DE) News Journal, October 19, 2014

My husband and I became aware of the difficulty in obtaining services for a person with addictions in Sussex County, who was reaching out for help, when we tried to find services for a family member.

All the avenues we tried told us either there were no beds available or the wait for services was unrealistically long. My awareness was heightened further while waiting from 8 a.m. until 3 p.m., after a two-hour drive, for our loved one to be admitted into the Kirkwood Detox Center. In addition to our own family's struggle to obtain services, the stories I heard when speaking with other individuals who were also waiting to be admitted into, or who had just been discharged from, Kirkwood lead me to the conclusion that services for individuals with addiction disease in Delaware were totally unacceptable.

Furthermore, the court's habit (pardon the pun) of incarcerating individuals with mental health and substance abuse issues without offering any form of treatment also should be examined in depth. Because of our personal experiences, I felt the need to raise community awareness to the problems of addiction and the raging heroin epidemic that is occurring in our state with the goal of effecting change for the better. The incident with the little only emphasizes how great that need is. Thankfully, the outcome of that situation was no worse than it was.

After conversations with several officials, I was advised to check >www.atTAcKaddiction.com<, the website for a proactive group in New Castle County who were working on the same issues that we felt needed to be addressed.

As I believe joining forces with others speaks with a louder voice to effect change for the greater good, my husband and I attended several of the group's meetings and, with their blessing, started the Sussex County Chapter of atTAcK addiction. We can be contacted at; attackaddictionsussexde@comcast.net. All are welcome to our meetings on the third Wednesday of each month in Bethel U.M.C.'s Fellowship Hall, 129 W. Fourth St., Lewes, with doors opening at 6:30 p.m. Following a half-hour of fellowship, our meeting begins at 7 p.m. To date we have had two meetings with an average attendance of 20 people. Since starting the downstate group, many individuals have reached out to us, both in gratitude and expressing the need for more awareness and many more services in Sussex County.

The goals of atTAcK addiction, Sussex County, are to reduce the stigma attached to the disease of addiction, particularly with respect to heroin addiction; to bring more, and a wider variety, of effective choices of treatment, including a Sussex County Detox and Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Center; to increase awareness education within our schools, starting at an early age, to the dangers of alcohol and drug use; to raise community awareness of the heroin epidemic by breaking through the barriers of denial that exist here, which only serve to prevent change from happening; and to offer compassion and support to families who have lost a loved one to this disease and to those in recovery.

We believe that by working proactively with our state and local representatives that we can make a difference.

Pauline Powell is head of the Sussex County Chapter of Attack Addiction.

LEGAL POT? IS THAT WHAT WE REALLY WANT? (WILNJ)

Wilmington (DE) News Journal, October 19, 2014

S.J. Perelman, the humorist who wrote some of the Marx Brothers' zaniest lines, once said, "I don't know anything about medicine, but I do know what I like."

That, apparently, is the way many Delawareans feel, especially about marijuana. A majority of those polled are in favor of legalizing it. Legalizing it, not just decriminalizing it, but allowing the open sale and use of marijuana like any other consumer product. (Well, not just any consumer product. We imagine some of the marijuana legalization group would not mind banning sugary drinks and other fast foods.)

Marijuana decriminalization is long overdue. It does not make sense to put people in jail for what

really is a minor offense. Public opinion is gathering behind a move to greatly reduce penalties on personal use of marijuana.

However, that is a short step. Legalization is the giant step that many are now advocating.

Washington and Colorado went in that direction and many people think that is just fine.

There is more to legalization than just mild recreational use of pot. For example, medical questions still remain. Earlier this month a study in the journal *Addiction* pointed to strong evidence that chronic marijuana use can cause physical harm. This is not a "Reefer Madness" type of study, but one that looked at evidence over 20 years. It showed that people do not overdose from marijuana, but chronic use may alter brain structure and function. Part of the reason may be the fact that the THC content in marijuana has been increasing over the years. THC is the chemical that causes marijuana's psychological effects.

The upshot is that we still have a lot to learn about the long-term use of marijuana.

Here's where a lot of people invoke S.J. Perelman's rule of medicine. That may be well and good for an individual, but society should think about the consequences before throwing out all regulations.

Another point to consider is legal. Marijuana use, even medicinal use, is against federal law. If Delaware legalized marijuana growing and use, that does not mean Maryland, Pennsylvania and New Jersey would follow suit. A Delaware pot tax might make a few legislators happy for a spell, but legalization would create a host of law enforcement problems here.

The point is that the decriminalization-legalization issue is not settled. We should have a debate. We should hear from all sides, especially health officials.

As a society, we obviously need to make our drug laws rational. We have to think beyond clichés such as "we lost the war against drugs." We have to start asking second-stage questions like "And then what?" Say Delaware legalized marijuana. Then what? Would we have an open, unregulated market? Age limits? Quantity limits? Who could grow it? Who could sell it? What about a tax? And what about any damage it would cause?

We may not like to be bothered with details. We may only care about a personal effect, but we should remember that there are always consequences.

IN OVERCOMING ADDICTION, THERE ARE NO SHORTCUTS (WILNJ)

By John F. Rittenhouse

Wilmington (DE) News Journal, October 19, 2014

As parents of a heroin addict, we live a life never anticipated. We successfully raised three children, vacationed, worshiped together, enjoyed the good things together and loved family time. When our youngest son launched, we felt like "we made it" and focused on our future as a couple. In early 2011, we learned our son had used Percocets and Oxycontin, leading to heroin. His needing money, followed by missing funds, credit cards, jewelry and other items opened our eyes that something was wrong. We cycled through the stages of shame, regret, anger and disbelief. After a year, some friends in the fight introduced a Narcotics Anonymous group where I reluctantly visited as I was ashamed, and felt like a failed father. But my wife and I were desperate for help. We went, we learned and we grew. If you are new to the fight, GO! Do not hesitate! NA circle provides perspective, folks who "get it" and information for the fight of "tough love." Equally, we found a support circle of praying friends inside our own church. At one point, we had six families impacted, and we supported and grew together. Talk to your pastor or priest. Find emotional, spiritual and family support networks for the battle ahead.

What have we learned? Heroin use is starting as young as 12, and 19 is the average age of new users. Percs and Oxys are leading the path to heroin use. Heroin is cheap and abundant in Delaware. Recovery rate is low. Life expectancy, five years. The clock is ticking. Time is not your friend. Let him or her hit "their bottom" quickly as possible!

Getting our son hungry, homeless and helpless was how we had to love him. But not in anger, nor in rage, but always assuring him, "We love you. We forgive you and are ready when you are ready to get help." There are NO shortcuts. The risk is high. The end is death or recovery. Period. Today our son is alive, sitting in a correction facility, at bottom, and ready to enter the Gateway program. Not the path we would have chosen, but thankful he is still in the fight.

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VICE PRESIDENTIAL *NEWS CLIPS*

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BIDEN IN THE NEWS

Iraq Fills Out Unity Government, Now Ready To Take On ISIS?

By Susannah George

[McClatchy](#), October 18, 2014

BAGHDAD Iraq's parliament has approved a series of key ministers after a month of wrangling, completing the formation of a unity government as the country's military and security forces struggle to push back the Islamic State.

Publicly, most Iraqi parliamentarians called the move a step in the right direction, but others dismissed the appointments as politically motivated and the appointees themselves as inexperienced.

"I think it's a good sign" says Mowaffak al-Rubaie, a longtime Shia statesman currently representing Baghdad in Parliament and a former security advisor to former Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki.

"Now that Mr. Abadi has completed his cabinet, the government can function," Rubaie explained.

Shortly after being sworn in as Prime Minister in September, Haider al-Abadi's initial nominations to the ministries of the Interior and Defense were rejected. The ensuing political deadlock fueled concerns that Abadi would be unable to bring about political reconciliation between Iraq's Sunnis and Shia, a key requirement for U.S. aid to the country's floundering military in the fight against the Islamic State.

Sunni distrust of Maliki's Shia dominated government and his increasingly sectarian policies were seen as a one of the principal factors leading to the rise of the Islamic State in Iraq.

U.S. officials lauded the completion of the cabinet as critical to building a durable coalition to defeat the Islamic State.

"Significantly, this is the first time since 2010 that Iraq has had a full cabinet with security ministers confirmed by the Iraqi parliament," State Department spokeswoman Jen Psaki said.

Vice President Joe **Biden** phoned Abadi and discussed "the work ahead, including steps to rebuild Iraq's security forces and enlist all of Iraq's communities in the fight against the Islamic State," the White House said.

The Ministry of Interior went to Mohammed Salem al-Ghabban, a Shiite lawmaker with the controversial Badr Organization. Abadi's previous nominee for the post was Hadi al-Amiri, the head of Badr and the former minister of transport.

In an interview shortly after the nominations were announced, Al-Amiri said he was satisfied with the choice of al-Ghabban as Minister of Interior.

"He was my choice," Amiri said. "I told Abadi from day one it didn't have to be me, it could be anyone from Badr."

The Badr Organization's armed wing has been accused of an array of human rights abuses including sectarian killings.

A Sunni parliamentarian from Mosul, Khaled al-Obeidi, will now head up the Ministry of Defense. The choice of a politician from Mosul is a symbolically important move as the city was the first major Iraqi metropolis to fall under the control of the Islamic State when militants swept across northern Iraq in June.

"I see both appointments as weak," said one senior Iraqi politician from a powerful Shia bloc in parliament who requested anonymity in order to speak freely. "They're young, inexperienced and not that bright." The politician said those character traits were particularly concerning as the two positions are responsible for the nation's security forces at a time when the country is battling a radical insurgency.

As for what the appointments say about the future of Abadi's Prime Ministership, the senior politician described it as "not promising."

Iraq's parliament also approved a tourism minister, a women's affairs minister and a minister of immigration and displacement. Two Kurdish ministers were also sworn in, a move former Kurdish parliamentarian Mahmoud Othman described as important because it could signal more cooperation between Iraq's Kurdish region and the central government in Baghdad.

"When they took that oath that means they are now part of this government and so now I think they should start serious talks," Othman said in reference to ongoing budget disagreements between the Kurdistan Regional Government and Baghdad.

But, he relented, ultimately he saw all of Saturday's appointments as pure politics. "The qualification comes second," he said. "They are all capable of doing the job, but I don't think they will do it well."

How To See Vice President Joe Biden In Syracuse

By Mark Weiner

[Syracuse \(NY\) Post-Standard](#), October 18, 2014

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Vice President Joe **Biden**'s visit to Syracuse on Monday for a campaign rally with U.S. Rep. Dan Maffei will be open to the public with no tickets required, according to the Maffei campaign.

Biden will address supporters for Maffei, D-Syracuse, at noon Monday inside an airplane hangar at Syracuse Hancock International Airport.

Biden and Maffei are expected to deliver remarks about strengthening the middle class at Syracuse Landmark Aviation Hangar #113, 113 Tuskegee Road in Mattydale.

Signs and volunteers will direct visitors to free parking near the terminal on the south side of the airport, according to the Maffei campaign.

Previous Maffei campaign rallies at the same hangar in 2010 and 2012 with former President Bill Clinton attracted crowds of 800 to 1,000 people.

Biden, a 1968 graduate of Syracuse University's law school, plans to make one other stop in New York state on Monday. In the morning, he is scheduled to appear with New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo in New York City for an event to discuss infrastructure modernization.

Biden has been on the campaign trail for several weeks, helping Democrats facing tough battles in midterm elections. Political analysts and polls show Maffei is vulnerable in his re-election campaign against Republican John Katko of Camillus.

Several polls have shown Katko moving within striking distance of Maffei, trailing by 3 to 8 percentage points.

Vice President Biden Adds Duluth Stop To Minnesota Visit

[Brainerd \(MN\) Daily Dispatch](#), October 18, 2014

WASHINGTON – Vice President Joe **Biden**'s Minnesota trip next week will include a stop in Duluth, the White House said Friday.

Biden will be in Duluth for an event on domestic violence issues on Thursday, his press office confirmed. Details of the event were not immediately announced.

Also Thursday, he is expected to travel to Hibbing to stump for Democratic U.S. Rep. Rick Nolan, who is locked in a tight battle for re-election against Republican challenger Stewart Mills and Green Party candidate Skip Sandman.

No further details on the time or location of the Hibbing rally had been released as of late Friday.

Andrew Cuomo Campaigns Without Traditional Events, While Challenger Rob Astorino Crosses The State

By Glenn Blain, Kenneth Lovett

[New York Daily News](#), October 19, 2014

ALBANY — It's the noncampaign campaign.

While underdog Republican Rob Astorino criss-crosses the state in a desperate hunt for votes, Gov. Cuomo is running out the clock until Election Day — a Rose Garden strategy on steroids.

Take last week for example. Cuomo spent much of it promoting his new memoir. That included a flurry of national media sitdowns, interviews with local TV stations limited to the book, a book-signing, and a visit to “The Late Show” reading a David Letterman Top 10 list.

Cuomo also held a press briefing on state preparations for Ebola and staged an in-and-out, 24-hour visit to Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic in a nod to New York’s Hispanic voters.

The trip was his third overseas dash in two months — he also swept into Israel and Afghanistan — after almost never leaving New York in 3 1/2 years. As for traditional campaign-style events, there was none, nor did he mention Astorino by name.

This week will open with more of the same. On Monday, Cuomo appears in Queens with Vice President **Biden** to “discuss infrastructure modernization.”

While Cuomo touted his book and left the state, Astorino descended on the South Bronx, where he danced with Hispanic seniors; delivered a speech calling for term limits; celebrated the Jewish holiday Sukkot in Brooklyn; stumped in Rochester, Westchester County and Long Island; and gave a whirlwind of radio interviews.

John Minchillo/AP

While Cuomo touted his book and left the state, Astorino (pictured) descended on the South Bronx, where he danced with Hispanic seniors; delivered a speech calling for term limits; celebrated the Jewish holiday Sukkot in Brooklyn; stumped in Rochester, Westchester County and Long Island; and gave a whirlwind of radio interviews.

At nearly every turn, he called Cuomo a coward for not agreeing to one-on-one televised debates.

“He’s the imperial governor who wants nothing to do with the average person and it shows,” Astorino said.

He added that when he ran for reelection in 2013 as Westchester County executive, he campaigned heavily and debated his Democratic opponent five times despite leading in the polls.

“It’s incumbent upon the incumbent to do that; otherwise, he loses touch with those he represents,” Astorino said.

Cuomo has held a few traditional campaign events in recent weeks — notably two Saturday bus tours highlighting women’s issues, and a Sunday visit to black churches.

“The governor has been campaigning with voters every weekend while doing his day job,” said campaign spokesman Matt Wing. With a huge money advantage and a big lead, Cuomo signaled early on he would not conduct a traditional press-the-flesh campaign.

CBS

Cuomo also made a visit to ‘The Late Show’ reading a David Letterman Top 10 list.

Faced with a Democratic primary challenge from little-known Fordham law professor Zephyr Teachout, Cuomo did virtually no campaigning until the last week of the race. He refused to debate Teachout.

Unlike his schedule over the last month, which has been filled with government events and, last week, appearances for his book, Cuomo spent many days during the primary with no public events at all.

“It seems to be a blend of entitlement and fear,” Teachout said.

Perhaps. But no political experts or analysts interviewed by the Daily News faulted Cuomo’s approach, even while admitting it deprives the public of a true debate on issues facing the state.

"This is a 'Seinfeld' version of the governor's campaign. It is a campaign about nothing," former Assemblyman Richard Brodsky (D-Westchester) said. But, it's a "pretty sound strategy."

Romney Leads Scattered 2016 GOP Field, Clinton Still Dominates The Democratic Race

[ABC News](#), October 19, 2014

Hillary Clinton continues to hold a commanding lead in the potential Democratic field for president in 2016, while the GOP frontrunner in the latest ABC News/Washington Post poll is a familiar figure – but one not favored by eight in 10 potential Republican voters.

That would be Mitt Romney, supported for the GOP nomination by 21 percent of Republicans and Republican-leaning independents. That's double the support of his closest potential rival, but it also leaves 79 percent who prefer one of 13 other possible candidates tested, or none of them.

When Romney is excluded from the race, his supporters scatter, adding no clarity to the GOP free-for-all. In that scenario former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush, former Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee and Kentucky Sen. Rand Paul have 12 or 13 percent support from leaned Republicans who are registered to vote. All others have support in the single digits.

Were Romney to run again, he'd likely face some of the same challenges that dragged out the 2012 GOP contest. He's supported by only half as many "strong" conservatives as those who are "somewhat" conservative, 15 vs. 30 percent in this poll, produced for ABC by Langer Research Associates.

Huckabee, for his part, does somewhat better with Republican-leaning independents than with mainline Republicans, a potential problem in closed primaries. He also does better with women than with men; that's reversed for Paul.

DEMS – Clinton continues to dominate on the Democratic side, with 64 percent support. Still, there are some gaps in her support: It's 54 percent among men vs. 70 percent of women and

55 percent among those younger than 50 vs. 72 percent among those 50 and older. And she gets less support from Democratic-leaning independents, 53 percent, than from mainline Democrats, 69 percent.

Vice President Joe **Biden** and Sen. Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts have 13 and 11 percent support, respectively. **Biden** does better among those under 50, those with less education and nonwhites; Warren, among college graduates and whites.

It's early days for all this, of course; the 2016 election is two years away. But after the midterms just two weeks off, it'll be the next item on the dance card.

METHODOLOGY – This ABC News/Washington Post poll was conducted by telephone Oct. 9-12, 2014, in English and Spanish, among a random national sample of 1,006 adults, including landline and cell-phone-only respondents. Results among the 871 registered voters interviewed have a margin of sampling error of 4 points, including design effect.

The survey was produced for ABC News by Langer Research Associates of New York, N.Y., with sampling, data collection and tabulation by Abt-SRBI of New York, N.Y.

Post-ABC News Poll: Absent Mitt Romney, Who Can Claim The 2016 GOP Banner?

By Dan Balz

[Washington Post](#), October 19, 2014

When Mitt Romney managed to get about 25 percent support in the early polls against his 2012 Republican rivals, everyone asked, "What's wrong with Mitt?" He was, after all, the presumed front-runner. Today, with a new Washington Post-ABC News poll showing something similar about 2016, the question could be, "What's wrong with all the others?"

The survey tested Romney against the prospective field of 2016 GOP presidential candidates. Ann Romney told Maeve Reston of the Los Angeles Times last week that she and the Romneys' sons are "done, done, done" with presidential politics after two failed campaigns. But for now, the former Massachusetts governor and 2012 nominee is at the top of the heap in the eyes of rank-and-file Republicans.

The Post-ABC poll found that 21 percent of Republicans or Republican-leaning independents say they favor the Romney as their 2016 nominee. That was almost double the 11 percent who named the person in second place, former Florida governor Jeb Bush.

Romney benefits as much or more from the fact that no one among the likely candidates has yet filled the vacuum he left behind. That he enjoys top billing among prospective 2016 GOP candidates says something about Romney but much more about the others in the unsettled field.

Romney enjoys a warm glow today in part because of what's happened to President Obama since 2012. Remembered are attributes or statements that look better in retrospect than they did at the time. Forgotten or dismissed are some of the mistakes Romney made in that campaign, from "self-deportation" to "47 percent."

With the assumption that Romney would not run again, the 2016 race always was going to look different than past Republican nominating contests. For the first time in a long time, there is neither an heir apparent (George H.W. Bush in 1988, Bob Dole in 1996, John McCain in 2008, Romney in 2012) nor a dominant first-time candidate (George W. Bush in 2000).

Republicans assumed their 2016 field collectively would be far stronger than the group who competed in 2012, which is now regarded as one of the weakest in modern times. That could still turn out to be the case, but so far no one has begun to break from the pack.

The Post-ABC poll highlights this. Taking Mitt and Ann Romney at their word that a third campaign is not in their future, this race is as wide open as it could be, at least in terms of early popular support.

Absent Romney, Jeb Bush leads with a mere 15 percent, Sen. Rand Paul (Ky.) is second at 12 percent, and former Arkansas governor Mike Huckabee is third at 11 percent — all within the five-point error margin.

After that, in descending order, are the single-digit candidates, all bunched between 8 and 6 percent: Rep. Paul Ryan (Wis.), Sen. Marco Rubio (Fla.), New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie, Ben Carson and Texas Gov. Rick Perry. Coming in below 5 percent are Sen. Ted Cruz (Tex.), former senator Rick Santorum (Pa.), Louisiana Gov. Bobby Jindal, Ohio Gov. John Kasich and, at 1 percent, Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker.

Bush's support is fairly even through various demographic and economic groups. Huckabee is stronger among women than men, while Rand Paul is the opposite. Paul Ryan does better with Republicans who have college degrees or incomes over \$50,000 than he does with those without degrees and making less.

On perhaps the most important divide within the GOP, Bush does significantly better among Republicans who say they do not support the tea party, as befits his establishment pedigree. Huckabee and Paul do better with the much larger group of Republicans who say they back the tea party movement.

Any analysis of 2016 polls comes with the obvious caution: Given the number of candidates and the absence of a clear front-runner, these early measures are far from predictive. Beyond that, they can't measure the fundraising wherewithal or the political staying power each candidate could bring to a campaign. Because they are national surveys, they don't take into account strengths or weaknesses in

the early states that winnow the field. Most significantly, they don't measure the quality of campaigning skills.

Examples abound from past campaigns to underscore those caveats.

Huckabee won the Iowa caucuses in 2008, but his campaign was always crippled by lack of money. Hillary Rodham Clinton had great national numbers in 2007 but always looked vulnerable in polls of Iowa Democrats. Perry is Exhibit A of the difference between how a candidate looks on paper and on the campaign trail.

If he decides to run, Bush should be able to raise the money needed, but he is at odds with his party's base on some key issues, and according to a recent Des Moines Register-Bloomberg Politics poll of Iowa Republicans, he comes in with just 4 percent support in the state whose caucuses kick off the process. The biggest question mark is whether he will even seek the nomination.

Others in the prospective field have even bigger question marks behind their names. Simply put, how many of the prospective candidates look better as this midterm election nears its conclusion than they did in the months right after the 2012 campaign? Readers can draw their own conclusions based on what they've seen so far.

On the Democratic side, there are no surprises. It's still Clinton vs. all others.

In the latest survey, 65 percent of Democrats and Democratic-leaning independents say they favor the former senator and secretary of state for the nomination. Vice President **Biden** is second at 13 percent, with Sen. Elizabeth Warren (Mass.), who has said repeatedly she has no intention of running, at 10 percent.

Although Clinton's support is strong through all demographic and economic groups, there are some variations of note. She enjoys far more support among women than men and stronger support among Democrats 50 or older rather than among those younger.

Clinton also wins demonstrably more support among white Christians than among those who say they have no religion. And she does better with white Democrats who do not have a college degree than with those who do. In that way, her profile differs from that of Obama, who has generally done better with voters who have college degrees and post-graduate degrees than those without.

That could prove significant in a general election. If that profile was to translate into her capturing a higher share of the white vote in a general election than Obama managed in 2012 while retaining the Obama coalition of minorities and well-educated whites, Republicans would be in trouble, unless they can offset it by doing better among non-white voters. First, however, they will have to find a candidate.

Farnsworth: Virginia Loves Romney

By Stephen J. Farnsworth

[Richmond \(VA\) Times-Dispatch](#), October 19, 2014

If Mitt Romney, the 2012 Republican presidential nominee, chooses to run for president again in 2016, he would be quite welcome in Virginia — more welcome, in fact, than many potential Republican candidates already designing their upcoming campaigns.

If Mitt Romney, the 2012 Republican presidential nominee, chooses to run for president again in 2016, he would be quite welcome in Virginia — more welcome, in fact, than many potential Republican candidates already designing their upcoming campaigns.

Indeed, in a hypothetical rematch this fall with President Barack Obama, a new statewide poll by the University of Mary Washington shows that the former Massachusetts governor would likely win the Old Dominion's Electoral College votes. Obama won the state two years ago by 4 percentage points, but the new survey shows a 2-point margin favoring Romney among registered voters.

In many ways, Virginia's Romney love should not be surprising. He spent a lot of time in the state during the 2012 general election campaign, and he coasted to victory in the Virginia GOP primary earlier that year. In addition, many Virginians favor politicians who have spent time in the private sector.

Romney's strengths are particularly notable given the other moderate Republicans with national profiles who also might be contemplating a 2016 presidential campaign. The UMW statewide survey of 1,000 adult residents conducted Oct. 1-6 found that 19 percent listed Romney as their favorite for the 2016 GOP nomination, as compared to 14 percent supporting New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie, 10 percent for former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush, and 8 percent for Sen. Rand Paul of Kentucky. U.S. Rep. Paul Ryan of Wisconsin, Romney's 2012 vice presidential running mate, and Sen. Marco Rubio of Florida were both at 5 percent in the survey and Sen. Ted Cruz of Texas came in at 4 percent.

The top rankings in the survey for Romney, Christie and Bush — all relatively moderate voices within the GOP — might spell bad news for conservative Republicans, many of whom supported Romney in 2012 and Sen. John McCain of Arizona in 2008 after more conservative presidential candidates dropped out. After the votes were counted in 2012, many conservatives insisted a more ideologically oriented campaign against Democrats would have been more successful than Romney's.

But the survey results suggest good news for the party's pragmatists: Conservative Republicans in Virginia nominated three of their own at a nomination convention last year and went on to lose all three statewide contests for the first time in more than 20 years.

Romney also is well-positioned as a compromise choice in a party divided among fiscal, religious and national security conservatives. He also was the second choice of 16 percent of Virginians surveyed, as compared to 8 percent who named Christie and 7 percent each selecting Bush, Paul and Ryan as their alternate preferences for the GOP nomination. More than one-third (35 percent) of those surveyed listed the former Massachusetts governor as their first or second choice, as compared to 22 percent who listed Christie as a top or second pick. Bush was third, with 17 percent of those surveyed naming him their first or second choice.

For the 2016 Democratic nomination, Hillary Clinton had a greater edge in Virginia over her party rivals in the survey than Romney did over his. Clinton had the support of 33 percent, as compared to 14 percent favoring Sen. Mark Warner of Virginia, who placed second, and 7 percent supporting Vice President Joe **Biden**, who ranked third in the poll.

The strength of Romney's appeal in Virginia has profound national implications. The Old Dominion is not just a "purple" state in its politics; it is also far more like America than are Iowa and New Hampshire, the first caucus and primary states. With its liberal Northern Virginia, its evangelical Southside, its agricultural heartland in the Shenandoah Valley and its industrial urban core in Hampton Roads, Republicans around the nation should take Virginia's nomination preferences very seriously.

Stephen J. Farnsworth is professor of political science and director of the Center for Leadership and Media Studies at the University of Mary Washington. Contact him at sfarnswo@umw.edu.

Buzz: Jeb Bush Genuinely Undecided And Genuinely Considering 2016 Presidential Run

By Adam C. Smith

[Tampa Bay \(FL\) Times](#), October 19, 2014

Political junkies in Florida don't have to worry about the drama ending Nov. 4, because once the governor's race wraps up, another huge political question emerges: Will Jeb run in 2016?

Former Gov. Jeb Bush has said he will make up his mind by year's end and most signs suggest he is both genuinely undecided and genuinely considering it. Meanwhile, U.S. Sen. Marco Rubio appears more likely to run, though Bush's candidacy would seriously crimp his fundraising and political network.

The latest Tampa Bay Times/Bay News 9/UF Bob Graham Center Poll underscores how much Bush overshadows Rubio, at least among Florida voters who presumably know them better than any other Republicans.

Among potential Republican presidential contenders, here's how support among likely Florida voters broke down: 35 percent said they would support Bush; 21 percent Rubio; 13 percent "someone else"; 10 percent Kentucky Sen. Rand Paul; 7 percent New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie; and 6 percent Texas Gov. Rick Perry. Among just Republicans, Bush drew 36 percent support, followed by Rubio with 24 percent. Among Democrats, Bush had 34 percent support, followed by "someone else" with 17 percent; and Rubio with 13 percent.

Bush may be the GOP frontrunner in Florida, but even here he is no Hillary Clinton. Asked about likely Democratic presidential contenders, 67 percent said they would choose Clinton (including 69 percent of Democrats, 53 percent of Republicans and 64 percent of independents).

Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren drew support from 12 percent of likely voters (10 percent from Democrats), followed by Vice President Joe **Biden** with 7 percent.

The telephone survey of 781 registered Florida voters — all likely to vote in the November election — was conducted Oct. 7-12 for the Tampa Bay Times, Bay News 9 and News 13 of Orlando by the University of Florida's Bob Graham Center for Public Service and Bureau of Economic and Business Research. The poll, which included respondents using land lines and cellphones, has a margin of error of plus or minus 3.2 percentage points.

Bush's considerations

Two other Bush tidbits that could influence his presidential decisionmaking:

- A new Des Moines Register/Bloomberg Politics poll of likely voters in all-important Iowa found that Bush trailed Clinton by 7 percentage points, and that 32 percent of Iowans had a favorable view of the former Florida governor and 38 percent an unfavorable view.

- His wife, Columba, has been rumored to be wary of a presidential campaign, and in an interview with the Associated Press in Texas he addressed that as well as his mother's public skepticism about another Bush running for president:

"As it relates to my mom, my mom's been around the track ... she just believes that it's something that she doesn't want my family to go through, although she's changed her mind on that. So I'm marking her down to 'neutral, trending in a different direction' than she was," Bush said. "My wife is supportive, but that doesn't mean that I don't understand the challenges that this brings. This is ultimately my decision, with as much consideration as I can to take into account the people that I really love."

Comedy wins

Stephen Colbert professes to be rooting for "Florida governor and python on Ecstasy Rick Scott," to win a second term, but on his show last week Colbert on Comedy Central said he understood why Crist insisted on bringing a fan to their televised debate.

"Based on that skin tone, I'd say his core temperature is 450 degrees. But why should Crist get to cool himself with a fan but Scott isn't allowed to control his temperature by lying on a chilled rock?"

Jon Stewart on The Daily Show went with more anatomically oriented humor in an eight-minute segment dubbed, "The Last Perspiration of Crist."

Fangate also dropped in on Late Show With David Letterman on CBS. Mentioning the ban on the fan in the debate, Letterman dedicated his Top 10 list to lesser known gubernatorial debate rules.

"We have some even more obscure than the fan rule," Letterman said.

They included: 9) In lieu of rebuttal, candidates may perform guitar solos; 6) Shirts must remain on for weigh-in; 4) Maximum three time outs for self-tanning application; 2) No slapping, no tickling; 1) Last candidate to take hands off podium wins.

Crisafulli's picks

Incoming House Speaker Steve Crisafulli, R-Merritt Island, has made his picks for the top leadership positions.

Rep. Matt Hudson, R-Naples, will serve as speaker pro tempore. Rep. Dana Young, R-Tampa, will be House majority leader. Rep. Ritch Workman, R-Melbourne, will be the Rules and Calendar chairman. Rep. Richard Corcoran, R-Trinity, will oversee the budget committee. (All are expected to win re-election in November, but stranger things have happened.)

Alex Leary, Michael Van Sickler and Kathleen McGrory contributed to this week's Buzz.

Emphasis On Early Voting As Quinn, Rauner Run Neck And Neck

By Lynn Sweet

[Chicago Sun-Times](#), October 18, 2014

WASHINGTON — President Barack Obama, Vice President Joe **Biden** and former President Bill Clinton all hit the Chicago area in the coming days to turn out the Democratic base vote for Gov. Pat Quinn, as early voting starts Monday in Illinois.

While there are many national stories about Obama being a drag on candidates, that's not the case in adopted homestate Illinois. Just in October, Obama will have been in Chicago twice; first lady Michelle once; **Biden** once, and, coming up Oct. 26, Dr. Jill **Biden** headlines a Democratic fundraiser in Chicago.

The White House would dispatch Bo and Sunny, the popular Obama Portuguese Water dogs, to Illinois if they could help.

Election Day, Nov. 4, is the last but by far not the only chance to vote, with enormous emphasis by Illinois Democrats and Republicans on voting by mail and the early vote, which runs through Nov. 2.

The campaigns of Quinn and GOP nominee Bruce Rauner are investing heavily in data analytics to microtarget likely voters — most specifically folks who usually sit out midterms — to inform field organizers where to send traditional grass-roots door knockers, phone calls and direct-mail pieces.

These efforts also will boost down-ticket candidates and could be crucial in some highly contested Illinois House battles, especially in the north suburban 10th congressional district.

Here are nine things to know about early voting in Illinois:

- * The most important element of partisan get-out-the-vote drives, aka GOTV, is to make sure you snare your voter and not unwittingly give a boost to your rival.

After all, this is an election, not a civics class.

- * Quinn needs a massive African-American turnout to beat Rauner (a poll released Friday shows a statistical dead heat), and that's why the Obama rally on Sunday night will be at the 6,000-seat Chicago State University Jones Convocation Center, 9501 S. King Drive. Obama also headlines a \$10,000-a-person fundraiser dinner Monday in Chicago for the Democratic National Committee.

- * Bill Clinton hits Chicago on Tuesday to bolster Quinn. Clinton, the "Explainer-in-Chief," is delivering a speech at Wheatland Tube, 4435 S. Western, where will make the case that Quinn has improved the Illinois economy and that unemployment has dropped on his watch. Hundreds of labor and business leaders have been invited to the event. At the 2012 Democratic convention, Clinton made the case for Obama in clearer, simpler terms than any other speaker, including the president.

* **Biden** is leading an early vote rally Wednesday for Quinn, Sen. Dick Durbin, D-Ill., and Rep. Brad Schneider, D-Ill., at the Sullivan Community Center, 635 N. Aspen, in Vernon Hills — in the 10th district, where Schneider is in a tight race with former Rep. Bob Dold, R-Ill.

* In Illinois, Democrats are running a coordinated GOTV drive led by Durbin, Quinn and Democratic Party of Illinois Chairman Michael Madigan, speaker of the Illinois House. The Republican Illinois GOTV operation is led and heavily bankrolled by the Rauner campaign.

* Meanwhile next week, Rauner will stump with popular mainstream Illinois Republicans — Sen. Mark Kirk, R-Ill., Comptroller Judy Baar Topinka and Rep. Peter Roskam, R-Ill.

* Who Rauner won't be with next week: Republican 2016 presidential contenders Sen. Ted Cruz, R-Texas, in Chicago on Wednesday and Sen. Rand Paul, R-Ky., in the city on Monday. Even though Paul is on the cover of Time this week, appearing anywhere with the tea party-aligned Cruz or Paul, with his eclectic views, could hurt Rauner with the independent and Democratic swing voters he seeks.

* Democrats are also getting a heavy turnout assist from Democratic-allied unions bankrolling a drive to approve a ballot question about raising the minimum wage in Illinois. That's a turnout tool. The "Raise Illinois" Coalition plans to knock on 300,000 doors emphasizing early voting starting on Saturday.

* Why the emphasis on early voting? Campaigns go to a lot of trouble to identify their likely voters, and they want to bank them early in order to not be at the mercy of variables, such as weather. Also, campaign workers keep track of early voters, so once the ballot is cast, they don't have to waste any more effort on that person.

Schneider, Dold Trade Jabs On Medicare

By Gregory Trotter

[Chicago Tribune](#), October 18, 2014

A debate Saturday between the rivals in the north suburban 10th Congressional District — Rep. Brad Schneider, the first-term Democrat, and GOP challenger Bob Dold — grew tense on the topic of Medicare.

Dold assailed Schneider as a partisan leader who's done little good for 10th District voters.

"You said you wouldn't cut a single penny from Medicare. You have gutted the program by over \$700 billion," Dold said to Schneider. "After you've misled the voters this many times, how can they expect to trust anything that you say?"

What followed was chippy back-and-forth over the intersection of the Affordable Care Act, Medicare and past budgets proposed by Rep. Paul Ryan, R-Wis., that Dold supported when he was in Congress. In the exchange, both politicians slung partisan Medicare talking points that have been largely debunked by fact-checking organizations in recent years.

The debate was sponsored by the League of Women Voters of Illinois and ABC 7 and will be televised on that channel at 1 p.m. Sunday.

For most of the debate, the candidates stuck to their campaign messaging. Dold stressed his willingness to break from party lines and represent the district in a bipartisan fashion; Schneider said Dold's past record was dependably right-wing.

"Only one of us has voted to cut Medicare and that's you," Schneider said. "You voted for a Ryan plan, and you voted for it twice, and the Ryan plan ends the Medicare guarantee."

In his rebuttal, Dold pointed out that the claim — "Republicans voted to end Medicare"; — was PolitiFact's "Lie of the Year" in 2011. PolitiFact is a nonpartisan fact-checking website associated with the Tampa Bay Times.

"What's interesting is he's running a campaign and he's trying to spout off things because he has no record to run on, and therefore wants to poke holes at me," Dold said.

Dold reiterate the claim that Schneider, by voting in support of the Affordable Care Act, voted to cut \$700 billion from Medicare.

That claim has also been repeatedly targeted by fact-checking groups that have made the distinction that \$716 billion will be reduced in future Medicare spending over a period of 10 years – a reduction of the spending growth rate, not a cut in current spending, according to FactCheck.org, a website run by the Annenberg Public Policy Center of the University of Pennsylvania.

Schneider unseated former Rep. Dold in 2012, winning by slightly more than one percentage point. This rematch has been closely watched and is considered a tossup by many observers.

Vice President Joe **Biden** is coming to the Chicago area Wednesday for a political rally in Vernon Hills in support of Schneider, U.S. Sen. Dick Durbin and Paul Vallas, the Democratic candidate for Illinois lieutenant governor.

Dold, Schneider Debate 10th District Issues

By Gregory Trotter

[Chicago Tribune](#), October 18, 2014

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Bill Clinton, In Return Visit, Praises Worcester

By Brad Petrishan

[Worcester \(MA\) Telegram & Gazette](#), October 18, 2014

WORCESTER — Once again effusive in his praise for the city he's visited often, former President Bill Clinton on Thursday joined high-level state Democrats in painting this year's gubernatorial race as one pitting a principled, compassionate progressive against a prop for the Republican elite.

"You've got a model most of this country and most of the world would die to have," the 42nd president said of Massachusetts. "Don't mess it up."

As a crowd of more than 800 listened with rapt attention in Clark University's Atwood Hall, Mr. Clinton delivered the case for Martha M. Coakley in an often conversational tone, remarking it was more appropriate for a city he admires than "some whoop-dee-doo speech."

"I love this place," he said, adding that while he would have gone anywhere Ms. Coakley asked, he specifically requested the city that supported him with "20,000 signs" during a 1998 visit in which Republicans were calling for his ouster.

The president's sentiment notwithstanding, campaign contributions suggest Ms. Coakley will likely hope Mr. Clinton's visit will help her in the right-leaning towns surrounding heavily Democratic Worcester. An analysis of state Office of Campaign and Political Finance records shows she was outraised nearly 5-to-1 by Republican opponent Charles D. Baker Jr. in Worcester County.

Between September 2013, when both candidates announced their run, and Sept. 30 of this year, Ms. Coakley raised \$67,362 in Worcester County, records show, while Mr. Baker raised \$326,525.

While Worcester County accounted for 8.3 percent of Mr. Baker's \$3.94 million state haul, it represented just 2.2 percent of Ms. Coakley's overall \$3.1 million tally.

"I said so in the beginning, this campaign is about ideas, not money," Ms. Coakley said Tuesday when asked about her struggles to fundraise in the county. "I think we will have sufficient funds to compete."

Mr. Clinton cast aspersions Thursday on super PAC money supporting Mr. Baker and denigrating Ms. Coakley during the election, particularly one ad that excoriated Ms. Coakley in her role as attorney general for defending a state agency that was failing children.

"Clearly a lie," Mr. Clinton said of the ad, criticizing Mr. Baker, who did not create it, for not calling on those who did to pull it from the air.

"(He) figured out more people would watch their televisions than would hear her press conference (refuting it)," Mr. Clinton said, repeatedly characterizing Mr. Baker and Republicans as out-of-touch affluent people who lack empathy for the disadvantaged.

"Do you really think they care about your kids or your families?" Mr. Clinton asked of the out-of-state money poured into super PAC ads. "They will be gone, and you will be left with your decisions and its consequences, for good or ill."

According to the state OCPF, super PACs have spent more than \$6 million supporting Mr. Baker or opposing Ms. Coakley, while \$3.7 million has been spent opposing Mr. Baker.

Simply put, Mr. Clinton said, Republicans are worried more about keeping their money than helping others, something he said is particularly evident when examining Mr. Baker's stances.

Mr. Clinton was effusive in his support for Ms. Coakley's platform of universal pre-kindergarten education, saying there is "no better investment for the future of Massachusetts" than making sure the 17,000 children on the waiting list for such education find placements.

"Her opponent says it's not that big of a deal," Mr. Clinton said, similarly criticizing Mr. Baker for his "blasé" reaction to the Hobby Lobby decision by the Supreme Court that struck down a federal mandate for employers to provide contraceptives to women.

Mr. Clinton also nicked Mr. Baker's opposition to the ballot question that would entitle employees to earn and use sick time as well as to raising the minimum wage.

In both instances, Mr. Clinton said, arguments that jobs would be lost and the economy would suffer are false.

"I've never been involved in a raising of minimum wage that wasn't beneficial to the economy," Mr. Clinton said, noting that Connecticut approved sick time a few years ago and has added jobs.

In addition to criticizing Republicans and Mr. Baker, Mr. Clinton praised what he sees as Ms. Coakley's personal strengths.

"You know she's going to do what she says she's going to do," Mr. Clinton said, lauding her efforts as attorney general protecting consumers, fighting cybercrime, taking on greedy insurance companies and recovering money from Medicare fraud.

Mr. Clinton also said that Ms. Coakley has the best record of any attorney general in the country when it came to helping people keep their homes following the 2008 economic crash. He said if it wasn't for her, 30,000 people in the state would have faced foreclosure.

"Quite simply, she's got a better record than her opponent," Mr. Clinton said. Repeating a refrain by all the speakers Thursday, he urged voters to get their friends motivated to go out and vote.

"I don't care what the polls say, she can win this race handily if you want it bad enough," Mr. Clinton said.

In addition to speaking on her behalf Thursday, Mr. Clinton also helped raise money for Ms. Coakley, as a spokeswoman confirmed a fundraiser with the former president before his speech raised about \$200,000.

Mr. Clinton was not the only big-time politician stumping in the governor's race Thursday, as organizers from Mr. Baker's campaign said a fundraiser with former governor Mitt Romney in Boston was expected to raise \$600,000 Thursday evening for Mr. Baker's ticket and the state party.

"Charlie hopes President Clinton enjoys his time here in Massachusetts but believes the people of Massachusetts should be the focus of this race, not D.C. power players," Tim Buckley, Mr. Baker's head spokesman, wrote in an email Thursday. "That's why he is so proud to have the support of prominent Democrats, independents and Republicans from where it really counts."

As Mr. Buckley said, Mr. Baker has secured the support of multiple Democrats statewide, including former Worcester City Manager Michael V. O'Brien.

He has also out-raised Ms. Coakley in left-leaning cities, including Lawrence, Lynn and Gloucester — cities he lost in his failed 2010 gubernatorial bid.

"Charlie and Karyn have raised more funds from more communities in Massachusetts than their opponents," Jim Conroy, Mr. Baker's campaign manager, wrote in a release Thursday night. "Charlie leads the race in low-dollar contributions."

Mr. Baker has not appeared publicly with many national Republican figures, while Ms. Coakley has enjoyed support from many Democratic mainstays.

"Hillary's coming up here in a few days, and you'll like that better," Mr. Clinton joked Thursday. In addition to the Clintons, first lady Michelle Obama campaigned with Ms. Coakley earlier this month, while Vice President Joseph **Biden** is set to come help her fundraise later this month.

Ms. Coakley was also talked up at Thursday's event by Gov. Deval Patrick, U.S. Rep. James P. McGovern and U.S. Sen. Edward J. Markey.

"It's going to have to happen out here in Worcester County," Mr. Markey said. "It always is won or lost in Worcester County."

If that's the case, the fundraising gap between the two could signal an uphill battle. In the more than 60 cities and towns in Worcester county, Ms. Coakley raised more than Mr. Baker in only five small towns.

"Does it present a disadvantage to her? Yes," said Michael P. Angelini, chairman of the law firm Bowditch & Dewey. "Unfortunately we live in a time when there's a lot of big money around, and money talks."

But the influential city Democrat said at the end of the day, everybody only has one vote. He said though it will be a struggle for Ms. Coakley in Worcester County, she can do well if she convinces the Democratic base to come support her principles.

"Martha Coakley has very strong beliefs. She may not express them with all the gusto that a loudmouth might, but that doesn't mean she's any less committed to them," he said.

Paul Watanabe, associate professor of political science at UMass-Boston, said he thinks Ms. Coakley has built momentum heading into Mr. Clinton's visit.

"She has really come out feisty in response to the ad about her advocacy of children," Mr. Watanabe said, adding that he isn't surprised at the funding gap she faces.

"I think the gap reflects a number of things, but it clearly reflects the fact that Charlie Baker as a Republican candidate is one like many predecessors before him of the Bill Weld and Paul Cellucci mold," he said. "A Republican with a chance can raise a lot of money."

Mr. Watanabe said though Mr. Clinton's visit could sway some voters, it isn't likely to make or break her showing in the county. What will be most important statewide, he said, is how Mr. Baker does with unenrolled voters.

"His once-big lead among unenrolled voters has shrunk considerably," he said, something that could spell "disaster" on Election Day.

Though some have painted the visits of the Clintons and others as signs of a fledgling campaign, Mr. Watanabe said he doesn't see it that way.

"This is not CPR that's being provided here," he said. "It's an important figure in the Democratic party embracing Martha Coakley and her candidacy."

What was clear Thursday, as Mr. Clinton posed for "selfie" photos with a few lucky college students as secret service tried unsuccessfully to shoo him into a waiting SUV, was that the former president and Worcester embrace each other strongly.

Whether that embrace extends to Ms. Coakley is a question Worcester County voters will answer Nov. 4.

Nunn, Biden Volunteer At Hands On Atlanta Day

By Aaron Gould Sheinin

[Atlanta Journal-Constitution](#), October 18, 2014

Democratic U.S. Senate hopeful Michelle Nunn returned to her volunteer roots on Saturday as she and Jill **Biden** volunteered at the 25th Hands on Atlanta Day service project.

Nunn, who founded the Hands on Atlanta volunteer organization, was joined by **Biden**, wife of Vice President Joe **Biden**, on a cloudless day in downtown Atlanta. Together the pair helped spread mulch and beautify a park on Boulevard after a rally at Fort Street United Methodist Church, while other volunteer teams spread out across the neighborhood.

While in Atlanta **Biden** will help raise money for Nunn's campaign against Republican David Perdue, but Saturday's event was decidedly non-partisan. The words "Perdue," "Senate," "Democrat" and "Republican" were never uttered.

Jill Biden Volunteers With Georgia Senate Candidate

By Julian Hattem

[The Hill](#), October 18, 2014

Second lady Jill **Biden** joined Democratic Senate hopeful Michelle Nunn and hundreds of volunteers in Atlanta on Saturday.

Biden and Nunn — who is challenging Republican David Perdue to replace retiring Sen. Saxby Chambliss (R-Ga.) in the upper chamber — worked on cleaning up a park in downtown Atlanta during an annual service day created by an organization Nunn founded 25 years ago, The Atlanta Journal-Constitution reported.

"We have jobs, we have families," **Biden** told the newspaper. "We have other obligations. The reason Michelle Nunn and a group of friends founded Hands on Atlanta Day 25 years ago is because we all know the value of community service."

Biden added that Nunn is "someone who is making a difference in Georgia."

Biden's trip to the state for a slew of fundraisers and campaign events comes as national political analysts sense growing momentum for Nunn. In recent polling, Nunn's campaign has closed the gap with Perdue and the two are currently running neck-and-neck, offering Democrats a rare opportunity to pick up a seat currently held by a Republican.

Vice President Joe **Biden**'s wife attended three fundraisers in the day she was in town, in addition to the service project.

Talking to the Journal-Constitution, Nunn said that she formed the service organization Hands on Atlanta two and a half decades ago because "people will always answer the call to service."

"There's nothing we can't do, no wrong we can't right, when we work together," she said.

Thousands Volunteer For Hands On Atlanta Day

[WXIA-TV Atlanta](#), October 18, 2014

ATLANTA, Ga. — Saturday morning featured community service with a scoop of politics.

At the 25th annual Hands On Atlanta Day there were a couple guests helping to cleanup two urban parks in the Old Fourth Ward.

Hands on Atlanta Day was created 25 years ago by a group that included none other than Senate candidate Michelle Nunn. It was started as a way for thousands of volunteers to give back to their community. But Saturday, it served as a campaign event for Nunn who had a little help from the Second Lady, Dr. Jill **Biden**.

"She is someone who has devoted her life to public service and that's why I'm so excited to be with her today," **Biden** said during the event.

Dr. **Biden** helped out by scooping mulch, for about five or six minutes before she moved on.

Nunn, to her credit, stayed around for awhile. Though she wouldn't take questions, instead saying Saturday was about service, not politics.

"We've done a lot of projects over the years to clean up the community, different neighborhoods," said volunteer Terri Theisen, a past board member of Hands on Atlanta.

The volunteers were cleaning up two urban parks on Boulevard in the Old Fourth Ward. That included pulling weeds, raking leaves and painting railings.

"We have to be responsible. We have to take responsibility for our surroundings, so that's what I'm doing," said volunteer Ali Carter.

This year, Hands on Atlanta expects to provide more than 125,000 hours of community service.

Obama Holds Saturday Night Meeting On Ebola

By Gregory Korte

[USA Today](#), October 18, 2014

WASHINGTON – President Obama held a rare Saturday night meeting with top advisers at the White House, convening national security staffers and public health officials to discuss the threat of Ebola.

The White House provided only a brief summary of the 75-minute meeting, saying White House advisers updated him on the "contact tracing" process used to identify and monitor people who may have come into contact with the Dallas health care workers who contracted Ebola.

Ron Klain, the newly announced White House Ebola "czar," was spotted entering the White House at about 5:30 p.m., but did not attend the meeting because he hasn't officially started, White House Communications Director Jennifer Palmieri said. He is still completing paperwork and hopes to start in the next week, she said.

Klain – whose official title will be "Ebola response coordinator" – did meet separately Saturday with White House Chief of Staff Denis McDonough "to start to get up to speed," Palmieri said.

Those attending the Saturday night meeting included Vice President Joe **Biden**, the secretaries of Defense, Health and Human Services and Homeland Security, and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Director Tom Frieden.

The meeting, which wasn't announced in advance, followed an afternoon of golf for the president at Fort Belvoir in Virginia. It's at least the third such meeting in four days with top administration officials devoted entirely to Ebola.

Obama departs Sunday for two days of political events, campaigning for Democratic candidates for governor in Maryland and Illinois Sunday. He will headline a Democratic National Committee event in Chicago Monday before returning to Washington.

In his weekly radio address Saturday morning, Obama urged Americans to educate themselves about the science behind how Ebola is – and isn't – spread.

"This is a serious disease, but we can't give in to hysteria or fear-because that only makes it harder to get people the accurate information they need," Obama said.

"We're a nation of more than 300 million people. To date, we've seen three cases of Ebola diagnosed here," he continued. "Now, even one infection is too many. At the same time, we have to keep this in perspective. As our public health experts point out, every year thousands of Americans die from the flu."

He also defended his decision not to institute a travel or visa ban to from the three African nations hardest hit by the epidemic, saying, "we can't just cut ourselves off from West Africa." Instituting a ban would make it harder to get aid to the region, he said, and cause people coming to the United States to lie about their travel histories.

Officials Brief Obama On Ebola Response

By Rachel Huggins

[The Hill](#), October 19, 2014

President Obama on Saturday evening met with members of his national security and public health teams for an update on the administration's response to the Ebola outbreak.

The president's advisers briefed him on the contact tracing process to identify and monitor individuals who may have come in contact with the two Dallas patients who've contracted the virus, according to a White House readout of the meeting.

Obama's team also reviewed measures to ensure that Dallas has resources to diagnose any additional cases safely and effectively.

Participants included Vice President Joe **Biden**, Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel, Health and Human Services Secretary Sylvia Burwell, White House Chief of Staff Denis McDonough, Director of the Office of Management and Budget Shaun Donovan, National Security Advisor Susan Rice, Counselor to the President Neil Eggleston, Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Thomas Frieden, Deputy National Security Advisor Antony Blinken, Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism Lisa Monaco among others.

President Obama: Americans Shouldn't 'Give In To Hysteria' On Ebola

By Bruce Alpert

[New Orleans Times-Picayune](#), October 18, 2014

WASHINGTON, DC – President Barack Obama Saturday urged Americans not to “give in to hysteria,” and realize that Ebola, while a serious disease, isn't an outbreak or epidemic in the United States.

“We're a nation of more than 300 million people,” the president said in his weekly radio address. “To date, we've seen three cases of Ebola diagnosed here – the man who contracted the disease in Liberia, came here and sadly died; the two courageous nurses who were infected while they were treating him. Our thoughts and our prayers are with them, and we're doing everything we can to give them the best care possible. Now, even one infection is too many. At the same time, we have to keep this in perspective. As our public health experts point out, every year thousands of Americans die from the flu.”

Moreover, the president said, “Ebola is actually a difficult disease to catch.”

“It's not transmitted through the air like the flu,” Obama said. “You cannot get it from just riding on a plane or a bus. The only way that a person can contract the disease is by coming into direct contact with the bodily fluids of somebody who is already showing symptoms. I've met and hugged some of the doctors and nurses who've treated Ebola patients. I've met with an Ebola patient who recovered, right in the Oval Office. And I'm fine.”

“Third, we know how to fight this disease. We know the protocols. And we know that when they're followed, they work. So far, five Americans who got infected with Ebola in West Africa have been brought back to the United States-and all five have been treated safely, without infecting healthcare workers.”

The president again rejected calls to block air travel from the three Western African nations at the epicenter of the disease, with 4,500 deaths so far. Among those advocating a travel ban – at least for non U.S. passport holders, are Gov. Bobby Jindal, Sen. David Vitter, R-La., Rep. Bill Cassidy, R-Baton Rouge, and Steve Scalise, R-Jefferson and Rep. John Fleming, R-Minden.

“We can't just cut ourselves off from West Africa, where this disease is raging,” Obama said. “Our medical experts tell us that the best way to stop this disease is to stop it at its source-before it spreads

even wider and becomes even more difficult to contain. Trying to seal off an entire region of the world—if that were even possible – could actually make the situation worse. It would make it harder to move health workers and supplies back and forth. Experience shows that it could also cause people in the affected region to change their travel, to evade screening, and make the disease even harder to track.”

The president said that combating Ebola “will take time.”

“Before this is over, we may see more isolated cases here in America,” Obama said. “But we know how to wage this fight. And if we take the steps that are necessary, if we’re guided by the science—the facts, not fear—then I am absolutely confident that we can prevent a serious outbreak here in the United States, and we can continue to lead the world in this urgent effort.”

Cassidy, a physician who is running for the U.S. Senate, has sharply criticized Obama’s approach, including his naming Friday of Ron Klain, an attorney and former chief of staff to Vice President Joe **Biden** and former Vice President Al Gore, to coordinate the administration’s response. Cassidy said that the coordinator should have been someone with medical experience.

“By appointing a Democrat political operative as the ‘Ebola czar,’ it is clear that the President sees Ebola as a political crisis and not a health crisis,” Cassidy said.

Josh Earnest, the president’s spokesman, said Klain has extensive management experience, and proven ability to coordinate diverse agencies, public and private, to deal with complex problems.

Sen. Mary Landrieu, D-La., said Thursday that “the people of Louisiana and the United States want us to be united when facing challenges – whether it is a disaster or a disease.”

“We need smart, swift and decisive action by the federal government to contain Ebola,” Landrieu said. “I urge the Administration to expand the current screenings from five to all 20 airports in the United States where tourists, international workers and businesses leaders from West Africa arrive. In addition, it is important to remember in face of constant calls for budget cuts, that the investments we make today in our health care system, NIH research and emergency response training at our hospitals can help prevent and quickly contain diseases like Ebola.”

Ebola ‘Czar’ Knows Washington, But Not Medicine

By Josh Lederman

[Associated Press](#), October 19, 2014

WASHINGTON — If there’s one thing the “Ebola czar” knows, it’s government.

Ron Klain, President Barack Obama’s new point man on Ebola, has no medical or public health background. But he does have a wealth of experience managing unruly federal bureaucracies in times of crisis. The White House says that makes him the perfect candidate to shepherd the government’s response to a deadly, growing outbreak.

Yet after demanding that Obama appoint a “czar,” some Republicans are balking at the president’s choice of a Washington insider and political operative to handle a public health emergency that has many Americans in fear.

And though Klain has tackled the national financial crisis and served as chief of staff to two vice presidents — he’s even been portrayed by Kevin Spacey in an HBO film — his latest gig may prove his toughest challenge.

“He’s there to get the job done, not win the Nobel Prize in medicine,” said Bruce Reed, another former chief of staff to Vice President Joe **Biden**. Reed worked with Klain in both the Obama and Clinton administrations.

Under immense pressure to step up his response, Obama turned to Klain on Friday. He's being asked to synchronize an alphabet blizzard of federal agencies: the CDC, NIH, HHS, DHS, FDA and DOD, to name a few. All are working in one fashion or another to stem Ebola in the U.S. and in West Africa, but breakdowns in the system that led to two health workers contracting Ebola in Dallas have raised concerns that the government isn't doing enough.

No, his title isn't "czar." He's the government's Ebola response coordinator.

Klain was Obama's first choice for the job, said White House spokesman Josh Earnest. He's expected to stay on the job just five or six months and will report to Obama's homeland security adviser, Lisa Monaco, and his national security adviser, Susan Rice. Those two advisers have been at the forefront of the Ebola operation at the White House, but with other threats competing for their attention, Earnest said Obama saw a need to bring on outside help to focus exclusively on Ebola.

An attorney and longtime Democratic operative, Klain served as Vice President Al Gore's chief of staff and was a key figure during the 2000 Florida presidential election recount, leading to his portrayal by Spacey in the HBO film "Recount." He previously served under Attorney General Janet Reno in the Clinton administration and later as **Biden's** chief of staff.

During Obama's first term, Klain helped spearhead the roughly \$800 billion stimulus package in 2009 in response to the financial crisis — a massive, cross-government project that Klain's supporters say offers parallels to the challenge he is now undertaking with Ebola. Out of government since 2011, Klain is currently president of the holding company of former AOL chairman Steve Case and general counsel for a Washington-based technology venture capital firm.

Yet Republicans criticized Obama's selection, calling Klain's experience insufficient and wondering why the president didn't choose someone with a background in, say, infectious disease control. With the midterm elections closing in, GOP lawmakers argued that picking a Democratic operative was tone-deaf to the public's growing concerns about Ebola and declining confidence in the government's competence.

"Leave it to President Obama to put a liberal political activist in charge of the administration's Ebola response," said Rep. John Fleming, R-La., himself a physician.

Former colleagues describe Klain as a born problem-solver with little patience for disorganization, waste or tardiness. When he oversaw the stimulus, his associates say, he was known for forcing agencies that didn't get along to cooperate.

"These situations can be pretty dark and seem extremely hopeless," said Jared Bernstein, **Biden's** former chief economist. "Ron's ability to see the best path to success keeps him and those around him focused in a pretty positive way."

Associated Press writer Jim Kuhnhenn contributed to this report.

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Loop Guidance For New Ebola Czar Ron Klain

By Al Kamen

[Washington Post](#), October 18, 2014

First of all, congratulations on your new czarship. It's not White House counsel or chief of staff, but it's very important. (Besides, McDonough can't be there forever, right?)

There will be people who'll say you don't have any background in matters medical, but ignore them. You are eminently qualified. You clerked for Byron White, for crying out loud, and anyone who could

handle Byron. . . And being chief of staff to both Al Gore and then Joe **Biden** isn't exactly a walk in the park.

Besides, the job apparently is to pull things together in the bureaucracy, to coordinate things and deal with Congress and the press. You're smart, savvy and you know this town and how it works better than most anyone. So maybe you're not an Everett Koop or Atul Gawande, but you'll be fine.

But always remember, you're dealing with irrational people demanding action, no matter how useless and even absurd it might be.

Congress doesn't want explanations and, as nature abhors a vacuum, most members abhor reason. Think of all the critics of "czars" — we recall John McCain's great tweet a while back that Obama had more czars than the Romanoff dynasty.

Obama has more czars than the Romanovs — who ruled Russia for 3 centuries. Romanovs 18, cyberczar makes 20.— John McCain (@SenJohnMcCain) May 30, 2009

(It was a funny tweet though.)

And now McCain has called for one as did other GOP members of Congress.

They want you to DO something. Anything. Counterproductive or stupid are not acceptable excuses. There have already been two confirmed cases of Ebola in this country.

So here's what you do.

First, you announce that "effective immediately," you are, as several members of Congress have demanded, banning all (repeat "all" for emphasis) non-stop flights from the West African countries most affected — Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia.

Furthermore, you say, you are, under the powers granted to you, immediately (repeat for emphasis) ordering the United States Air Force to shoot down any passenger planes violating the ban.

Since there are, in fact, no non-stop flights from those countries, this should be no problem. You might think this is crazy, because other countries may follow suit, thereby crippling the economies in West Africa just when they need all the resources they can muster to battle Ebola. (You would be right, but, as Margaret Thatcher once famously told Bush I on the eve of the first Persian Gulf war in 1990: "This is no time to go wobbly, George.")

Sure, most people come to this country after boarding connecting flights in Paris, Brussels or London. Some 36,000 a day come from the most affected countries, with 25 percent headed to the United States. Admit that's a problem and say you're working on it "in consultation with our allies." (A reassuring way to say you're having a conference call.)

Finally, the trickiest move of all — though the White House will be forever indebted to you. You are, with great sadness, taking Fox News off the air lest viewers come across anchor Shepherd Smith's long, articulate and impassioned segment Wednesday condemning "hysterical" and "irresponsible" media coverage and explaining what's actually happening with Ebola using real, true facts to insist "there is no Ebola spreading in America," so everyone should get a goddamn grip, calm down and get a flu shot.

Finally, you should emphasize (use somber, remorseful tones here) your "profound and abiding" respect for the First Amendment and explain that this a temporary measure, albeit necessary because we're dealing with the end of civilization here.

Good luck.

Hillary To Hit Boston On Friday To Stump For Coakley

By Matt Stout

[Boston Herald](#), October 19, 2014

Former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton is set to sweep into Boston next Friday to give a star-powered bump to Democratic gubernatorial nominee Martha Coakley, who's counting on a long list of high-profile surrogates to help energize voters.

Clinton, long viewed as a potential 2016 White House contender, will appear at an afternoon rally with Coakley at the Park Plaza Hotel in downtown Boston, a campaign aide said — a little more than a week after her husband, former President Bill Clinton, stumped for Coakley in Worcester.

It adds to a growing list of power players who have already turned out for the attorney general in her neck-and-neck race with Republican nominee Charlie Baker.

First lady Michelle Obama appeared with her earlier this month in Dorchester, as did Vice President Joe **Biden**, who is set to return to headline a fundraiser for Coakley on Oct. 29. Bill Clinton addressed 800 supporters at Clark University yesterday before skipping off to Manchester, N.H., where he delivered a similar stump speech to Democrats there.

Rumblings of a Hillary Clinton visit have floated around the Coakley campaign for weeks after the Herald reported earlier this month that Democrats were working to lure the former first lady to the Hub to help pump some much-needed cash into Coakley's campaign.

A fundraiser with Bill Clinton helped pull in \$200,000, Coakley's campaign said, but even after taking nearly \$300,000 in public financing this month, she and running mate Steve Kerrigan still trail Baker by nearly \$1.2 million in cash on hand as of midmonth.

More details on Hillary Clinton's visit weren't available last night, Coakley's campaign said.

With policy plans trotted out and a series of debates separating the candidates from the Nov. 4 vote, appearances by the Clintons and others are targeted at stirring momentum and energy in a base that traditionally skips the voting booths when a president isn't on the ballot.

"Don't forget this: This matters," Bill Clinton implored of supporters in Worcester. "Every one of you will speak in these next 19 days to a hundred people who might not vote. Every one of you. And if they all do vote, we'll all be celebrating on Election Day."

Biden's Son Won't Have Conn. Law License Reviewed After Positive Cocaine Test

By Stephen Braun

[New London \(CT\) Day](#), October 18, 2014

Washington — Hunter **Biden**, the youngest son of Vice President Joe **Biden**, faces no automatic review of his law license in Connecticut following his discharge from the U.S. Navy Reserve after testing positive for cocaine use, Connecticut legal authorities said Friday.

Hunter **Biden** works in Washington as a private equity executive and board director of an international energy firm, but he is admitted to practice law in Connecticut, where attorneys' privileges can be examined under a disciplinary review system. Legal clients, state lawyers, judges and any citizen can file grievances, but as of Friday, none had been filed, authorities said.

Lawyers in Connecticut face automatic review of their bar admission only when they have been convicted of a crime, said Michael P. Bowler, Connecticut's Statewide Bar Counselor, who heads a team of lawyers that investigate attorney grievances. Criminal convictions have to be reviewed by a statewide grievance committee, as do other complaints, which can range from drug and alcohol abuse to inadequate legal representation.

“At this point, I’m not aware that Mr. **Biden** has been arrested for anything, and certainly not convicted,” Bowler said. The Navy’s brief confirmation of **Biden**’s discharge did not cite any arrest or charges. Two people familiar with the matter told The Associated Press he was kicked out after testing positive for cocaine, confirming what was first reported by The Wall Street Journal.

Bowler added that **Biden** had told state authorities in 2007 that he was also admitted to the bar in Washington, D.C. Current District of Columbia bar records do not show **Biden** as member.

The Navy said Thursday that **Biden** was discharged in February from a part-time position as a public affairs officer in the Navy Reserve but did not provide a reason. **Biden** released a statement through his attorney saying, “I deeply regret and am embarrassed that my actions led to my administrative discharge.”

Biden, 44, a former Washington lobbyist, is a managing partner at the Rosemont Seneca Partners investment firm and a director at Burisma Holdings, a Ukraine-based energy company. A Washington lobbyist for Burisma, David Leiter, did not respond to requests for comment from The Associated Press.

Mark Dubois, the president of the Connecticut Bar Association, said that state bar and ethics officials are sensitive to news accounts involving misbehavior of lawyers admitted to practice in the state, but he said, “They have to be judicious about starting the process.”

Dubois, who formerly investigated and prosecuted ethical misconduct as Connecticut Disciplinary Counsel, said authorities have initiated cases in the past involving drug and alcohol abuse by attorneys, but “only when it’s a fairly extensive record of abuse.”

NEW YORK TIMES AND WASHINGTON POST OP-EDS

A Rate Cap For All Consumer Loans

[New York Times](#), October 19, 2014

The Obama administration has proposed much-needed improvements in federal rules that are supposed to protect service members from predatory loans that trap them in debt and, in certain circumstances, can end their military careers. The changes would repair glaring weaknesses in the rules used to carry out the Military Lending Act of 2007. But the administration and Congress should not stop there. Millions of civilians are also exposed to ruinously priced loans. What is needed is a national consumer lending standard — and interest rate cap — to ensure fair credit in the country as a whole.

The Military Lending Act sought to protect service members from debt traps by applying a 36 percent interest cap and other consumer protections to a subset of products, including certain kinds of payday loans and vehicle title loans. However, open-ended credit, long-term installment loans and some other products fell outside those rules.

Even after the law was passed, a South Carolina lender gave a service member a \$1,615 title loan on a 13-year-old car and charged \$15,613 in interest — an annual rate of 400 percent — without violating federal law. The new proposed rules close this and other loopholes by applying the 36 percent cap to most credit products aimed at service members, with some common-sense exemptions.

Troops who are saddled with excessive debt are burdensome to the military. They have morale problems and are costlier to manage because they need counseling and other services. Debt also affects military readiness: Thousands of troops have been barred from serving abroad because the debt they carry is thought to make them security risks.

The predatory loans that are pushing service members into penury, however, are not unique to them. Earlier this year, for example, the federal Consumer Financial Protection Bureau found that hidden

fees and charges on payday loans were so high that only 15 percent of borrowers could raise the money to repay the total debt on time without quickly borrowing again. Nearly two-thirds of the borrowers were forced to renew their loans — some more than 10 times — depleting their resources and digging them deeper and deeper into financial holes.

Poor and working-class people across the country are being driven into poverty and default by deceptively packaged, usuriously priced loans. The obvious solution is a national standard for consumer lending. Both the House and Senate have bills pending that would adopt the 36 percent standard for all consumer transactions, including those involving payday loans, mortgages, car loans, credit cards, overdraft loans and so on.

Predatory lenders and their surrogates in Congress may claim that a national standard is inconsistent with free enterprise. In truth, rate caps were found in all of the original 13 colonies. Moreover, 46 states and the District of Columbia set interest limits on at least some of the small loans typically offered by payday lenders.

Payday lending expanded significantly during the 1990s, when many states unwisely exempted the lenders from usury caps. Since then, many states have seen the light, but not nearly enough. Resourceful payday lenders have also managed to evade even tough state laws by setting up shop elsewhere or using the Internet. It's clearly time for a national standard.

From Jimmy Carter, A Rebuke To Egypt

[New York Times](#), October 19, 2014

Over three decades, the Carter Center in Atlanta, led by former President Jimmy Carter, has established itself as a respected advocate for human rights and democracy. It has sent observers to 97 elections in 38 countries, worked to persuade governments to respect freedoms and human rights, and supported citizens who defend those principles. But it has thrown in the towel on Egypt.

In a statement last week, the center announced that it would close its Cairo office after nearly three years and would not send experts to monitor parliamentary elections later this year. "The current environment in Egypt is not conducive to genuine democratic elections and civic participation," Mr. Carter said as part of the statement, which warned that political campaigning in an already polarized situation "could be extremely difficult, and possibly dangerous, for critics of the regime."

The center's withering judgment is a damning critique of Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, a former general who overthrew President Mohamed Morsi, an Islamist allied with the Muslim Brotherhood, in 2013. It also sends two powerful messages to the Obama administration.

One is that playing down Mr. Sisi's repressive tactics is bound to backfire and drive aggrieved Egyptians to violence and extremism, destabilizing both Egypt and the region.

The other is that absent a radical shift in Egypt's approach, there is no way Secretary of State John Kerry can credibly certify to Congress anytime soon that the country is on a democratic path. That certification is a condition of Egypt's receiving \$650 million worth of American tanks and fighter planes. It should be withheld until Mr. Sisi shows he is serious about putting in place "a state that respects the rights and freedoms," which he disingenuously described in a United Nations speech in September.

Washington is obviously concerned about upsetting an important Arab ally that honors its peace treaty with Israel and permits expedited passage through the vital Suez Canal. But at some point the United States must draw a line. It would also be helpful if Israel, which prides itself on its democracy and has productive ties with Mr. Sisi, encouraged him to abandon the authoritarian course he has followed ever since he got himself elected president in a rigged vote in 2014. Mr. Sisi has cracked down on

dissidents, opposition groups and journalists, including three respected professionals working for Al Jazeera. The Carter Center expressed alarm about the mass arrests of Brotherhood leaders and supporters, whom Egypt has unfairly branded as terrorists. More than 16,000 people are in jail for political reasons; more than 1,000 were killed during protests.

A so-called protest law passed in 2013 sharply limits freedoms of expression and assembly. Another law dating from the regime of Hosni Mubarak, who was ousted in 2011, is aimed at regulating nongovernmental civic groups as well as international organizations like the Carter Center. The center noted that Mr. Sisi's government was tightening enforcement of that law while proposing a new law that would be even more restrictive. Mr. Sisi has also amended the penal code so that anyone charged with receiving money or arms from a foreign country or organization could face a life sentence.

In 2013, an Egyptian court found more than three dozen employees of foreign nonprofit groups, including 16 Americans, guilty of receiving illegal funds from abroad and operating unlicensed organizations. Most of those charged left the country and did not serve prison time, but the threat of further arrests has increased.

Nongovernmental interest groups of all kinds, including the Carter Center, obviously have cause for alarm. But so do all Egyptians who do not toe Mr. Sisi's authoritarian line, and that cannot possibly instill confidence in the foreign investors and tourists who are vital to rebuilding Egypt's troubled economy. America must do what it can to persuade Mr. Sisi to abandon this dangerous course.

The House's Ethics Lesson For The Senate

[New York Times](#), October 19, 2014

The public's low opinion of Congress has had one good effect: It has helped to insulate the Office of Congressional Ethics from members of Congress who might privately pray for the office's demise.

The semi-independent ethics office was created six years ago, after the Jack Abramoff corruption scandal, and has since become a credible watchdog of misbehavior by House members, who dare not abolish it, much as many of them resent its oversight. The office has built such a strong reputation of nonpartisanship and professionalism in conducting discreet preliminary investigations of accusations against House members that it stands as a powerful argument for creating a parallel office in the Senate, which has no such ethics monitor.

The chambers' differing approach to enforcing their ethics codes is no small matter in modern politics, with the rising torrent of secret and unregulated campaign money inevitably driving quid pro quo suspicions. Almost half of the complaints fielded by the House ethics office involve aspects of campaign money.

The Federal Election Commission has such a woeful enforcement record in this area that Congress's own ethics committees face a greater responsibility to guard against misbehaving lawmakers. Unfortunately, members of the Senate carry out ethics investigations in murky privacy, devoid of the sort of accounting to the public that the House ethics office is required to make.

These differences have been laid out in a new study showing that the House's own ethics committee has become much more active since the ethics office was created to vet complaints, not quietly bury them. Even without subpoena power, which it should have, the office referred about a third of its inquiries to the ethics committee for further consideration. As a result, 20 disciplinary actions were approved by the House committee in the last five years — four times the rate in pre-O.C.E. periods, according to the study by Public Citizen, an ethics watchdog group.

In contrast, the Senate ethics committee has been as lumbering and guarded as a tortoise, dismissing most complaints with just a few letters of admonition and no disciplinary actions voted against members in the last seven years. A person familiar with the procedures of the Senate committee told The National Journal that the vast majority of accusations received do not fall under its jurisdiction and involve complaints about the executive branch or floor speeches by lawmakers. This may be so, but why is the public told so little about complaints that might merit review?

In the House, complaints the ethics office sends along to the ethics committee must be disclosed regularly as something the public is plainly entitled to know.

The Ebola Scare

By Ross Douthat

[New York Times](#), October 19, 2014

I PROMISED myself I wouldn't do it, but I did: While flying from D.C. to Dallas last week, just after the news came out that an Ebola-infected nurse had been allowed to fly while running a fever, I went back and read the opening pages of Stephen King's "The Stand."

In King's epic, perhaps his finest, a superflu with a 99.4 percent fatality rate accidentally escapes from a desert laboratory and lays waste to civilization. King being King, supernatural developments ensue for the survivors. But the book is at its most terrifying in the unraveling with which it opens, when the only bogeyman that matters is a hacking cough that spreads and spreads and spreads.

To reread these pages now — in a time of national, well, not panic but least disquiet over the handling of Ebola inside our borders — is to be struck both by parallels and by crucial differences between the scenario King conjured and what we fear today.

The parallels lie, not surprisingly, in the realm of official incompetence. King's superflu escapes because various computerized safeguards fail; it spreads because of interagency chaos in chasing down patient zero; it compromises a C.D.C. facility whose safeguards turn out to be insufficient. The chaos swirling around the Dallas Ebola infections has followed this kind of pattern: the patient sent home undiagnosed; the unprepared hospital and the infected nurses; the C.D.C.'s weird slowness in taking over; the confident governmental assurances giving way to blame-shifting, double talk and the appointment of a political hack as Ebola princeps ... er ... sultan ... er, czar.

But the differences are interesting as well. King's novel, infused with 1970s-era paranoia, imagines a government that blunders constantly but is also malignantly competent — brilliant enough to design a superflu capable of killing 99 percent of humanity, tyrannical enough to suppress media reports with martial law and murder, ruthless enough to swiftly spread the superflu behind the Iron Curtain to make sure our enemies go down with us.

This part of the novel's vision is of a piece with all of modern conspiracy culture, which requires a certain level of omniscience to sustain its theories about covered-up alien landings or 9/11 inside jobs.

But conspiracy culture, while always resilient, has had a tough go of it of late. From the Iraq war to Hurricane Katrina and various Obama-era debacles, the public has been steadily conditioned to fear government incompetence much more than it fears secret conspiracies against the public good. Instead of the Bilderbergers and the Trilateralists and the cigarette-smoking man, it's Mike "heckuva job" Brown and George "slam dunk" Tenet and whoever was allegedly in charge of the V.A. hospital system who haunt our collective unconscious these days. People still indulge the occasional "House of Cards"-style fantasy of all-powerful political puppetmasters, but what actually scares us is the idea of the Ebola epidemic being managed by the gang from "Veep."

I suspect that's part of why Obama-era scandals that may actually involve secret government machinations — from the N.S.A. revelations to the harassment of journalists and the politicized overreach of Lois Lerner's I.R.S. division — haven't fixed themselves in the public imagination, at least among people who don't have an explicit ideological or political interest at stake. Wisely or not, Americans have trouble imagining the White House that gave us the HealthCare.gov rollout micromanaging partisan I.R.S. chicanery, or the national security bureaucracy that couldn't see 9/11 or the Islamic State coming doing anything all that Machiavellian with a firehose's worth of online data.

Likewise with Ebola: Of course you can find wild conspiracy theories, but the idea of a successful government cover-up — secret body bags, muzzled journalists — is basically laughable. Instead, the baseline anxiety is all about bureaucratic incompetence exacerbated by insouciance, with conservatives fearing that a liberal administration won't be willing to go far enough — in terms of travel restrictions and quarantines — to effectively contain the disease's spread.

Because plausible arguments have been offered for and against a travel ban, the administration's actual response will be an interesting case study. As much as the authorities have fouled up so far, we've only had a few infections. If the White House continues to resist calls for more dramatic measures, and we manage to contain Ebola domestically, then the president and his appointees will look more competent and levelheaded than their critics — a result that's all too rare these days.

Given the track record, however, it's easy to imagine somewhat less fortunate results, and travel restrictions increasingly seem like an appropriate hedge against ongoing domestic incompetence.

But it would be welcome, and then some, to watch a competent strategy unfold that rendered that opinion obsolete.

And then, our faith in government's effectiveness partially restored, we can all get back to worrying about what's being secretly cooked up in the Nevada desert.

The Virus Of Cynicism

By Frank Bruni

[New York Times](#), October 19, 2014

WE have no clue at this point how far Ebola could spread in the United States — and no reason for panic.

But one dimension of the disease's toll is clear. It's ravaging Americans' already tenuous faith in the competence of our government and its bureaucracies.

Before President Obama's election, we had Iraq, Katrina and the meltdown of banks supposedly under Washington's watch. Since he came along to tidy things up, we've had the staggeringly messy rollout of Obamacare, the damnable negligence of the Department of Veterans Affairs and the baffling somnambulism of the Secret Service.

Now this. Although months of a raging Ebola epidemic in West Africa gave the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention sufficient warning and ample time to get ready for any cases here, it was caught flat-footed, as its director, Tom Frieden, is being forced bit by bit to acknowledge. Weeks ago he assured us: "We are stopping Ebola in its tracks in this country." Over recent days he updated that assessment, saying that "in retrospect, with 20/20 hindsight," federal officials could and should have done more at the Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital in Dallas.

President Obama made his own assurances and then corrections. He said back in mid-September that "in the unlikely event that someone with Ebola does reach our shores, we've taken new measures so that we're prepared here at home."

Well, we weren't wholly prepared, and the event was never unlikely: This country is a potent magnet for travelers, with a proudly (and rightly) open posture toward the world. People stream in all the time. And a federally funded study published in early September calculated a nearly 20 percent "probability of Ebola virus disease case importation" within three weeks. Within four, Thomas Duncan, the Liberian man who was initially (and inexplicably) turned away from the Dallas hospital, was at last admitted and treated for Ebola.

After that screw-up by hospital officials, Frieden told us that the right protocols were in place. But it now appears that Duncan wasn't immediately put in isolation; that nurses attending to him were confused about the proper use of protective garb; and that the clothing they wore may have left bits of skin exposed.

We've learned of the C.D.C.'s bizarrely permissive attitude toward the hospital workers who came in contact with Duncan or his lab samples. While they should have been on restricted movement, one took flights — after first calling the C.D.C. for a green light — from Texas to Ohio and back. Another boarded a cruise ship. By Monday, will we find out about a C.D.C.-approved game of Twister in the hospital staff room?

This is bad, not because it means that a large number of Americans are at risk of infection but because it confirms the sloppiness of the very institutions in which we place the most trust. It's spreading the virus of cynicism.

And the C.D.C.'s missteps have much different implications from the errors made by the Secret Service and by Veterans Affairs. Individual Americans don't fear that the Secret Service's lapses will endanger them personally, and many of them aren't directly affected by the wrongdoing of hospitals for veterans. But they can imagine themselves on one of those flights or in some other closed space with an infected person. They feel vulnerable.

Because the Ebola response deepens doubt about the current government, it almost certainly hurts incumbents in the midterm elections and favors change. That's unhappy news for Democrats as they fight to retain control of the Senate, and by the end of last week, they were spooked. I heard that not only in my conversations with party strategists but also in the statements of Democratic candidates themselves.

BRUCE BRALEY, locked in a tight Senate race in Iowa, publicly upbraided the Obama administration for what he characterized as a sluggish response. Al Franken, running for re-election in Minnesota, said there should at least be serious consideration of the sorts of flight restrictions that Obama has dismissed. Even Jay Carney, the president's former spokesman, mentioned such restrictions as potentially wise policy.

Rationally or not, this is one of those rare moments when Americans who typically tune out so much of what leaders say are paying rapt attention, and Obama's style of communication hasn't risen fully to the occasion. Even as he canceled campaign appearances and created a position — Ebola czar — that we were previously told wasn't necessary, he spoke with that odd dispassion of his, that maddening distance.

About the ban, he said, "I don't have a philosophical objection necessarily." About the czar, he said that it might be good to have a person "to make sure that we're crossing all the T's and dotting all the I's going forward." He's talking theory and calligraphy while Americans are focused on blood, sweat and tears.

Ebola is his presidency in a petri dish. It's an example already of his tendency to talk too loosely at the outset of things, so that his words come back to haunt him. There was the doctor you could keep

under his health plan until, well, you couldn't. There was the red line for Syria that he didn't have to draw and later erased.

With Ebola, he said almost two weeks ago that "we're doing everything that we can" with an "all-hands-on-deck approach." But on Wednesday and Thursday he announced that there were additional hands to be put on deck and that we could and would do more. The shift fit his pattern: not getting worked up in the early stages, rallying in the later ones.

It's more understandable in this case than in others, because when it comes to statements about public health, the line between adequately expressed concern and a license for hysteria is thin and not easily determined. Still, he has to make Americans feel that he understands their alarm, no matter how irrational he deems it, and that they're being leveled with, not talked down to, not handled. And he has a ways to go.

"If you were his parent, you'd want to shake him," said one Democratic strategist, who questioned where Obama's passion was and whether, even this deep into his presidency, he appreciated one of the office's most vital functions: deploying language, bearing, symbols and ceremony to endow Americans with confidence in who's leading them and in how they're being led.

Right now in this country there's a crisis of confidence, and of competence, and that's the fertile ground in which the Ebola terror flowers. That's the backdrop for whatever steps Obama and Frieden take from here. With the right ones, they can go a long way toward calming people who are anxious not just about Ebola but about America. I don't even want to think about the wrong ones.

An Affair To Remember, Differently

By Maureen Dowd

[New York Times](#), October 19, 2014

WE live in a world awash in unreliable narrators.

Officials at the Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital were unreliable narrators on Ebola. The Internet is bristling with unreliable narrators who prefer their takes to the truth. The unsavory husband and wife in the thriller "Gone Girl" are such chillingly unreliable narrators that they easily beat out the undead unreliable narrator, Dracula, at the box office. And let's not even start on Fox News.

So now comes the riveting "Rashomon" in Montauk, Showtime's "The Affair," with Ruth Wilson and Dominic West offering alternating he recalls-she recalls versions of the same story in each show, as they get swept up in sexual infidelity and a serious crime during a shimmering summer.

I went to Brooklyn to talk to West — the British actor who played the raffish Baltimore detective Jimmy McNulty in "The Wire" on HBO — and the show's co-creator, Sarah Treem, as they shot scenes at a school there.

West's character, Noah, is a novelist and teacher who lives in a Brooklyn brownstone with his wife, played by Maura Tierney, and four kids. He's happily married but feeling insecure about the lackluster performance of his first novel. It gets worse when his wife giggles at his facial expression during lovemaking, and he's taunted by his arrogant father-in-law, a famous fiction writer who owns the oceanfront mansion in the Hamptons where the family is spending the summer.

When West meets Wilson's comely Alison, a diner waitress and Montauk native who is also married to someone she loves (Joshua Jackson) and also feeling uncertain and anxious, the chase is on.

But who's chasing whom? In West's memory, Alison is sultry and curvy, wearing sexy outfits and seducing him. In Alison's version, she's wan and withdrawn, still mourning the drowning death of her small son and dubious about Noah's aggressive blandishments.

Treem, a playwright and “House of Cards” writer, created “The Affair” with Hagai Levi, with whom she also worked on HBO’s “In Treatment.”

Treem said the new show uses sex to illustrate that the characters are “trying to connect and they fail at it all the time. I think we have a lot of sex in this show, but in terms of the sex where they’re actually unified, that happens very rarely.”

Treem is a newlywed. In June, she married Jay Carson, a former campaign spokesman for Howard Dean and Hillary Clinton who is a producer on “House of Cards” and the father of Treem’s nearly 2-year-old son. Yet the brainy, alluring 34-year-old has an intriguingly jaded philosophy of romance.

“I have this belief that, in all relationships, there’s this long erotic moment that happens at the beginning of the relationship,” she said. “It’s like the pole of a tetherball court, and then everything else is just basically that damn ball going around, winding and unwinding around that one erotic moment, and you’re trying to always get back to that incredible moment of connection with somebody, and it’s gone forever.”

She said they put up a quote by the poet Robert Hass in the writers’ room, the final line of a passage where he describes the sensation of making love to a woman: “I felt a violent wonder at her presence like a thirst for salt, for my childhood river with its island willows, silly music from the pleasure boat, muddy places where we caught the little orange-silver fish called pumpkinseed. It hardly had to do with her. Longing, we say, because desire is full of endless distances.”

I tell her that Carson asked me if he should be worried, given how knowingly his wife writes about infidelity.

She laughed, replying, “I wrote the show when I was still single at 31, so at that point in your life you see a lot of infidelity. You have married men coming on to you. You see your friends already in affairs. From my perspective at that point, infidelity was all over the place. Now, being married, I would like my marriage to work. I love him, and I want to be faithful to him, and I want him to be faithful to me.” But, she adds matter-of-factly, “you probably have a 20 percent chance, maybe a 10 percent chance, of actually getting through an entire marriage with no infidelity.”

When I ask her if she thinks that men are more prone to cheat, she instantly replies: “Yes, I do.”

West agrees that the show may be “a shag-a-thon,” as he merrily put it, but its real subject is meant to be marriage.

“When you have four kids, inevitably your sex life suffers,” said West, himself a father of four. “But, for me, in my 20s and 30s, the stakes are much higher if you’re unfaithful. I feel, as you get older, the stakes get a lot lower. I don’t think infidelity would bother either me or my wife so much as if anything happened to our children, for instance. It ceases to be the primary anxiety.”

WHEN I mentioned that it was interesting how, in Noah’s remembrance, Alison has fuller breasts, West’s eyes widened in surprise.

“Does she?” he said, laughing. “Is that right? Well spotted.”

The actor said that, after playing Iago and the English serial killer Fred West, he yearned for a more heroic role.

“I was really keen to play a good guy,” he said, with a wry smile. “So this is the good guy I’m playing — a cheating husband.”

As Ebola Rages In Africa, The International Response Continues To Lag

[Washington Post](#), October 19, 2014

THE VIRUS particles that cause the Ebola and Marburg hemorrhagic fevers are shaped like filaments, straight and sometimes curled, 80 billionths of a meter in diameter. Once they have infected a person, the particles replicate in many human organs, including the liver, spleen, kidney, lungs and lymph nodes, destroying cells and leading to death in more than half the cases.

This cycle is repeating itself relentlessly in the outbreak zone of Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea. The toll continues to soar in what one expert, Michael Osterholm, has called “virus time,” and it is outpacing the decisions of nations. Last spring, much of the world wasn’t even listening to the cries for help from Doctors Without Borders, which has been at the front lines of fighting the virus in West Africa. Now, the alarms about cases in the United States have reached a crescendo, in waves of panic fueled by hyperactive news and social media. But the actual response on the front lines of the epidemic — in Africa — is lagging in what Mr. Osterholm called “bureaucratic program time.”

Debate in the United States continues to be focused on the wrong question: whether travel to this country from West Africa should be banned. As virtually every credible public health authority has said, it shouldn’t be. Restricting travel will not prevent potential Ebola carriers from reaching this country, only make them more difficult to track. Ron Klain, the veteran political manager appointed by President Obama to oversee the U.S. response, should start by rejecting these politically-motivated and irresponsible demands.

If there is something to panic about, it is the failure to get ahead of the outbreak in Africa. Should the international community not stop Ebola in the epicenter of the outbreak, it could well spread to other vulnerable regions with weak public health infrastructure, and then beyond in a tableau that will dwarf today’s crisis, which has so far killed at least 4,546 people and infected more than 9,100 in the three nations where it began.

On Friday, Christopher Stokes of Doctors Without Borders said Ebola was still out of control in the region, and it was “ridiculous” that volunteers for the charity are still bearing the brunt of care in the worst-affected areas, running about 700 of the 1,000 treatment beds available in the region. The United States, Britain and some other nations, after a slow start, have rallied with funding pledges and are now building more treatment facilities. While encouraging, Mr. Stokes told the BBC that the latest efforts are still “not having any significant impact on the epidemic and it won’t now for maybe another month or month and a half.”

Tolbert Nyenswah, the head of Liberia’s response effort, was quoted by the Wall Street Journal as saying, “Tell the international community that they have failed Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea, and they are still failing. They knew our health system did not have the capacity.” In addition to treatment facilities, the region desperately needs doctors and nurses to cope with the epidemic.

The experts are clear: What is required to prevent Ebola from spreading to the United States is quicker and more comprehensive action in Africa. The world needs to meet Ebola on virus time.

The Post Endorses Muriel Bowser For D.C. Mayor

[Washington Post](#), October 19, 2014

D.C. RESIDENTS have reason to be disaffected with city government and politics. The incumbent mayor has operated under the shadow of the illegal campaign fundraising that helped to put him in office. Three members of the D.C. Council left their offices in disgrace. This sad state of affairs played a part in the unusually low turnout for the April primary, and it may help explain why many voters say they remain uninspired by the mayoral election just 2½ weeks away.

We hope they look again. This is a critical election, and it offers a clear choice. Despite the ethical cloud that has hung over Mayor Vincent C. Gray and contributed to his defeat in the Democratic primary, he will leave office in January with the city on generally sound footing. Its finances are healthy, its schools are attracting more families every year and many neighborhoods are reinvigorated. His successor must maintain that momentum while providing the leadership to confront new challenges.

Muriel Bowser, Ward 4's representative on the council and the Democratic nominee, is the candidate best prepared to provide that leadership. We endorsed her in the primary but acknowledged it was not an easy choice because of the capable opponents then running against her. We faced no such dilemma this time. Neither council member David A. Catania (I-At Large) nor former council member Carol Schwartz comes close to Ms. Bowser in temperament, work ethic, ideas, policy understanding and balanced approach.

We don't discount Ms. Schwartz's past accomplishments (notwithstanding her wrong-headed opposition to the mayor's takeover of the schools) or her love of the city, but sentimentality cannot advance the District or the interests of its residents. She has failed to present a credible rationale for her independent candidacy.

Mr. Catania also can point to accomplishments in his 17 years on the D.C. Council, including his advocacy for same-sex marriage and his oversight of health care in the District. But he also has been on the wrong side of many important issues. If it were up to Mr. Catania, it is likely there would be no city-financed baseball stadium for the Nationals to play in and no convention center to attract visitor dollars, not to mention the hundreds of jobs created by both projects. The money-draining D.C. General Hospital might still be limping along. That Mr. Catania seems unable to concede he might have been wrong is all the more troubling.

Also worrisome has been Mr. Catania's stewardship of the council's education committee, which roughly coincided with his interest in becoming mayor. Instead of forging a meaningful collaboration with the city's able schools chancellor, Kaya Henderson, he set out to pass a series of bills that were sure to capture headlines but would do little to improve schools. D.C. schools are on the mend because Mr. Gray and his predecessor, Adrian M. Fenty (D), put competent professionals in place and let them do the job. The well-documented concerns about Mr. Catania's temperament raise questions about what kind of leader he would be — "bully" is a word that crops up with disturbing frequency — and have been amplified by the often mean-spirited campaign he has run.

Ms. Bowser, by contrast, has grown only stronger as her candidacy has progressed. A lifelong Washingtonian, she is well positioned to bring substance to the "One City" motto that Mr. Gray articulated but had trouble fulfilling. She is committed to better serving longtime residents, especially the poor who have benefited least from Washington's rise, but also appreciates the urgency of attracting businesses and welcoming new residents. Her travel to other cities has given her insights into what works and what doesn't and bespeaks a refreshing willingness to admit there are things she doesn't know.

Those critical or jealous of Ms. Bowser have painted a caricature of a lightweight. That is not the tough politician we have come to know and admire in her seven years on the council. She strikes us as smart, capable and confident without being arrogant. On the council, she has learned the ins and outs of government, from zoning to ethics to tree canopies. As mayor she says she would set priorities, find the right people to pursue them — including a professional city administrator — and give them the support to get it right. She has said that chancellor Henderson and Police Chief Cathy L. Lanier would be among those on her team, if they agree to stay.

We enthusiastically endorse Muriel Bowser. She is the clear, best choice for voters on Nov. 4.

Standardized Tests Must Measure Up

By Arne Duncan

[Washington Post](#), October 19, 2014

As a parent, I want to know how my children are progressing in school each year. The more I know, the more I can help them build upon their strengths and interests and work on their weaknesses. The more I know, the better I can reinforce at home each night the hard work of their teachers during the school day.

The standardized tests my kids take are one gauge on the dashboard, but parents and educators know that tests are not the only indicator.

Last week, state education chiefs and district superintendents announced a plan to examine their assessment systems, ensure that assessments are high-quality and cut back testing that doesn't meet that bar or is redundant. I welcome that important step.

Parents have a right to know how much their children are learning; teachers, schools and districts need to know how students are progressing; and policymakers must know where students are excelling, improving and struggling. A focus on measuring student learning has had real benefits, especially for our most vulnerable students, ensuring that they are being held to the same rigorous standards as their well-off peers and shining a light on achievement gaps.

However, many have expressed concern about low-quality and redundant tests. And in some places, tests — and preparation for them — dominate the calendar and culture of schools, causing undue stress.

Policymakers at every level bear responsibility here — and that includes me and my department. We will support state and district leaders in taking on this issue and provide technical assistance to those who seek it.

To be clear: I strongly believe in using high-quality assessments, including annual tests, as one (but only one) part of how adults improve instruction and hold themselves responsible for students' progress. With my own kids, I know parent-teacher conferences, grades and other feedback round out the picture of whether they're on track.

After a generation of watching other nations surpass ours educationally, the United States is putting the building blocks in place for schools that will once again lead the world. But for this effort to pay off, political leaders must be both strong and flexible in support of the nation's educators.

America's schools are changing because our world is changing. Success in today's world requires critical thinking, adaptability, collaboration, problem solving and creativity — skills that go beyond the basics for which schools were designed in the past. But in recent decades, other countries have retooled their schools faster than we have.

We must do better. A great education isn't just what every parent wants for his or her child; it's a necessity for security in a globally competitive economy.

The good news is that, thanks to the hard work of educators, students and communities, America's schools have made historic achievements in recent years. The U.S. high school graduation rate is at an all-time high, and the places most committed to bold change have made major progress on the nation's report card. Since 2000, high school dropout rates have been cut in half for Hispanic students and more than a third for African Americans. College enrollment by black and Hispanic students has surged.

Perhaps even more important, educators are taking fundamental steps to help reclaim the United States' leadership in education. Throughout the country, students are being taught to higher standards,

by teachers empowered to be creative and to teach critical thinking skills. Last year, nearly 30 states, led by both Republicans and Democrats, increased funding for early learning.

Yet change this big is always hard, and political leaders — myself included — must provide support and make course corrections where needed. We are asking a great deal of our educators and students. Despite their hard work, and a growing embrace of many of these changes, one topic — standardized testing — sometimes diverts energy from this ambitious set of changes.

Fortunately, states and districts are taking on this challenge — including places such as Rhode Island and New York state; St. Paul, Minn.; Nashville; and the District, where leaders are already taking actions to limit testing. As they and others move forward, I look forward to highlighting progress others can learn from.

States are also leading the way on improving test quality, building assessments that move beyond bubble tests and measure critical thinking skills and writing; the Education Department has provided \$360 million to two consortia of states to support that work. And to reduce stress on teachers during this year of transition, my department in August offered states new flexibility on connecting teacher evaluation to test results.

It's vital that political leaders stand behind changes that will prepare our young people for success in the real world — changes that educators have worked so hard to get underway. We must also stand behind states that have increased standards for learning, and where adults are holding themselves responsible for the progress of all students. We must stand strong for responsible and equitable school funding. We must stand strong for making both preschool and college accessible to all.

And we must stand strong in the knowledge — not the belief but the knowledge — that great schools make a difference in the lives of all children.

The writer is U.S. secretary of education.

A Campaign With No Answers

By Ruth Marcus

[Washington Post](#), October 19, 2014

The closing days of a closely fought election rarely offer uplifting moments, but the 2014 season has been particularly dreary, nearly devoid of content and high on unedifying spectacle.

Perhaps the iconic moment came when former Florida governor Charlie Crist (D) faced an empty lectern for seven minutes while his Republican opponent, Gov. Rick Scott, sulked over Crist's insistence that he have a cooling fan at his stand. Seriously, seven minutes. At which point Scott blinked, and the debate that voters deserved could finally start.

But behavior that disrespects voters knows no partisan label. Consider Kentucky Democrat Alison Lundergan Grimes's steadfast refusal to say whether she voted for President Obama.

Grimes, seeking to unseat Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R), has obviously judged that the cost of ducking this reasonable question is less than the damage of offering an answer that would, presumably, align her with the president.

This strikes me as the wrong calculation: The voters who would be alienated by a straightforward answer are probably already lost to Grimes, but I can imagine wavering voters being turned off by her dodginess.

Even worse is Grimes's sanctimonious effort to wrap her evasiveness in patriotic bunting, the "sanctity of the ballot box" and the privacy protections for voters enshrined in the state Constitution.

"This is a matter of principle," Grimes said in a debate Monday. "I'm not going to compromise a constitutional right provided here in Kentucky in order to curry favor on one or the other side or for members of the media."

Spare me. Sure, the average citizen has every right to tell reporters to buzz off when asked how they cast their vote. But a politician whose job entails campaigning for politicians of her party? Who was an Obama delegate to the national convention? Who was all too happy to disclose the fact of her vote for Hillary Clinton during the 2008 Democratic primaries?

In the same category of behavior disrespectful to voters, I'd put the refusal of Kansas Senate candidate Greg Orman to tell the people of his state which party he supports. Orman, an independent hoping to unseat Sen. Pat Roberts (R), has said he would caucus with whichever party turns out to hold the majority.

Indeed, Orman manages to out-Grimes Grimes: While she won't say who she voted for in private, he doesn't want to talk about who he'll vote with in public.

Asked recently whether he owed the voters of Kansas an answer about which party he'd support, Orman non-answered, "I sort of reject the premise of that question. . . . I think it's an opportunity for Kansas to define the agenda in the United States Senate."

This is "Let's Make a Deal" politics, with voters relegated to guessing what's behind door No. 3.

And Orman isn't the only Monty Hall running. In South Dakota, former Republican senator Larry Pressler, running as an independent for his old job, is similarly coy. He has announced that "I don't agree with Obama on very many things" and told the Hill newspaper he would be a "friend of Obama" in the Senate and had voted for the president twice.

I'm fine with running for office as an independent — there's enough orthodoxy in both parties to make your head explode — but that's different than running as a cipher. The ideological chasm between the two parties has grown so large that someone with fixed political convictions — other than that he should wield maximum influence — can't plausibly waver between the two.

Not that the major-party candidates are covering themselves with glory this cycle. The Republican strategy boils down to yoking your Democratic opponent as tightly as possible to Obama. The champion may be North Carolina's Thom Tillis, who managed, in the course of an hour-long debate with Sen. Kay Hagan, to cram in 10 references to her voting with Obama 96 percent of the time.

In a debate last week in Louisiana, Republican Bill Cassidy said of Sen. Mary Landrieu (D), "She represents Barack Obama. I represent you."

The Democratic response is essentially: Barack who? Thus Landrieu's retort: "While President Obama is not on the ballot, the future of Louisiana is."

Perhaps campaigns are like childbirth: There is a natural human tendency to forget the nonsense (in the case of elections) or the pain (in the case of both elections and childbirth). But this one may take longer than the usual two years to forget.

Read more from Ruth Marcus's archive, follow her on Twitter or subscribe to her updates on Facebook.

In Colorado, Overheated Rhetoric From 'Mark Uterus'

By George F. Will

[Washington Post](#), October 19, 2014

DENVER

One of the wonders of this political moment is feminist contentment about the infantilization of women in the name of progressive politics. Government, encouraging academic administrations to micromanage campus sexual interactions, now assumes that, absent a script, women cannot cope. And the Democrats' trope about the Republicans' "war on women" clearly assumes that women are civic illiterates.

Access to contraception has been a constitutional right for 49 years (*Griswold v. Connecticut*, 1965). The judiciary has controlled abortion policy for 41 years (*Roe v. Wade*, 1973). Yet the Democratic Party thinks women can be panicked into voting about mythical menaces to these things.

One Democrat whose gallantry toward women is monomaniacal, Sen. Mark Udall (Colo.), is now uncomfortably known here as "Mark Uterus." He is seeking a second term by running such a relentlessly gynecological campaign that the *Denver Post*, in endorsing his opponent, Rep. Cory Gardner, denounced the "shocking amount of energy and money" Udall has devoted to saying that Gardner favors banning birth control.

Actually, Gardner favors over-the-counter sales of oral contraceptives. In addition to being common sense, Gardner's proposal is his way of making amends for formerly advocating a state constitutional "personhood" amendment (it is again on the ballot this year and will be decisively rejected for a third time) and for endorsing similar federal legislation that has zero chance of passage. By defining personhood as beginning at conception, these measures might preclude birth control technologies that prevent implantation in the uterus of a fertilized egg. On this slender reed, Udall leans his overheated accusations that Gardner is bent on "trampling on women's rights," is on a "crusade" for "eliminating" reproductive freedoms and would "outlaw birth control."

Gardner, 40, cherubic and ebullient, is a human sunbeam whose unshakable cheerfulness is disconcertingly authentic as he exclaims to the waiter at breakfast, "Thank you for your work this morning!" A fifth-generation Coloradoan who lives in a prairie town in a house once owned by his great-grandparents, Gardner is amused by an anomaly: "Udall looks like the Republican in this race — dour and angry."

When Gardner ran an ad saying Udall is "a real nice guy" but too much a creature of Washington to change it (Udall's father, an Arizona congressman, ran for president; Udall's uncle was an Arizona congressman and interior secretary; Udall's cousin is a senator from New Mexico), Udall, in high synthetic dudgeon, called the ad a reprehensible attack on his family. Which elicited this puckish headline in the *Washington Examiner*: "Cory Gardner calls Mark Udall 'nice guy'; Democrats want ad pulled."

In losing Colorado's 2010 Senate race, the Republican candidate carried men by 14 points but lost women by 17. This 31-point gap will not be replicated this year. In a recent Fox News poll, Gardner trailed Udall among women by just 5 points while leading among men by 17. Independents favored Gardner by 15 points.

Barack Obama accepted the 2008 Democratic nomination here in a football stadium decorated with faux neoclassical columns made of plywood. He excoriated John McCain for having "voted with George Bush 90 percent of the time." Ask Gardner to pass the salt and he will say: "Udall has supported Obama 99 percent of the time." The world turns.

So does Gardner. Ross Kaminsky, a radio host here, writes:

"Gardner tells a personal story. 'I was visiting a high school in Kit Carson, Colorado, when a young woman came up to me asking about in-state tuition for non-citizens. 'I'm graduating at the top of my high school class, but my parents brought me here illegally when I was 5 years old and without in-state tuition I can't afford college,' she told me.' Gardner's answer — that for several reasons this really needed to be

dealt with as part of broader immigration reform — left him feeling unsatisfied even though it accurately represented his view. He continues: ‘Five years later, I went back to Kit Carson and sat down in a little restaurant for a quick bite. And who do you think ended up serving me? The same girl who five years earlier was the valedictorian of her high school.’ Gardner’s conclusion . . . is that this cannot be the best outcome for the girl, for her family, or for the state of Colorado.”

In order to change your mind, you have to have one. The “war on women” incantation is mindless — a substitute for thought. This is surely obvious to thinking women, including one Gardner knows in Kit Carson.

The Nasty Politicization Of Ebola

By Dana Milbank

[Washington Post](#), October 19, 2014

Francis Collins, director of the National Institutes of Health, administered a dose of truth to political Washington this week.

For this honest service, Collins was pilloried.

In an interview published Sunday night, Collins shared with the Huffington Post’s Sam Stein his belief that, if not for recent federal spending cuts, “we probably would have had a vaccine in time for this” Ebola outbreak.

This should not be controversial. His conjecture was based on cold budgeting facts. NIH funding between fiscal year 2010 and fiscal year 2014 had dropped 10 percent in real dollars — and vaccine research took a proportionate hit. Research on an Ebola vaccine, at \$37 million in 2010, was halved to \$18 million in 2014.

Officials at the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Disease report that budget cuts forced them to shelve 14 Ebola-related grants, roughly a quarter of the total. NIH was forced to prioritize spending to react to the most pressing current threats rather than potential ones, and because there was little Ebola activity at the time, shifting money to Ebola from, say, cancer or Alzheimer’s research wasn’t a viable possibility.

With Ebola vaccines now entering clinical trials, it’s not much of a stretch to conclude that, with those extra research dollars, vaccines would now be on the market — potentially saving thousands of lives in Africa and avoiding panic in the United States.

Yet conservatives pounced. Commentator Michelle Malkin’s Web site, Twitchy, called Collins a “fool” (this fool previously led the mapping of the human genome) and assembled tweets saying the Ebola vaccine could have been paid for with money spent on President Obama’s vacations or the White House vegetable garden, among other things.

Republican candidates have begun making a campaign issue of waste at NIH and its sister agency, the Centers for Disease Control. “Have you seen what the NIH spends money on?” Sen. Rand Paul (R-Ky.) asked, mocking Collins’s claim at a rally I attended Wednesday. “One hundred seventeen thousand dollars spent to determine that most monkeys are right handed, and like to throw poop with their right hand, apparently. Two-point-four million of the NIH dollars was spent on origami condoms.”

The senator, who then proposed more budget cuts, ought to update his examples. The right-handed monkey study? Done between 1992 and 1997. Origami condoms? The new device worn by women could protect millions, particularly in Africa, from AIDS. But perhaps Paul, an ophthalmologist, thinks that’s frivolous.

Collins, an evangelical Christian, was aghast that his remarks “turned into this really nasty political outcome that has resulted in attacks on NIH,” he told me Thursday. “People are saying I’m overstating the circumstances, which I don’t think I am.”

Collins said he was equally appalled by an ad this week by the liberal Agenda Project Action Fund that juxtaposes Republicans saying the word “cut” with images of Ebola carnage. “Republican Cuts Kill,” it concludes.

Collins sees his beloved NIH – for decades the beneficiary of broad bipartisan support – falling into the gaping maw of politics that has consumed most everything else. “I’ve tried so hard in the 21 years I’ve been at NIH,” he said, “to keep medical research from becoming a partisan issue.”

Even hardcore libertarians tend to agree that medical research and public health, like national defense, are among the few things that should be a federal responsibility. Eric Cantor, the recently deposed House majority leader, made a big push for government funding of medical research.

But while NIH funding grew steadily over the years, it leveled off at \$28 billion in 2004 and was at \$29.3 billion in 2013. When you factor in medical inflation, NIH’s purchasing power is down 23 percent over that period.

Collins admits it’s a mistake to think “throwing money at a medical problem automatically results in breakthroughs.” But there are a few major research projects on the cusp of success that could bring financial benefits far beyond the cost — much as the U.S. government’s \$3.8 billion initial investment in Collins’s Human Genome Project has fueled new medical industries and economic growth of as much as \$1 trillion.

Now, NIH-funded researchers are “a few years away,” Collins said, from a universal flu vaccine that could protect people against virtually all strains — even pandemics — without the need for annual shots. Yearly flu epidemics suck an estimated \$87 billion out of the U.S. economy and claim tens of thousands of lives; a pandemic strain could be much worse.

Who, of any political philosophy, would say it’s not worth \$121 million — and more — for a universal flu vaccine?

Who would say, given the economic catastrophe that an Ebola outbreak could cause, that spending tens of millions more for an Ebola vaccine is wasteful?

Only a fool.

The West Is Paying Dearly For Cozying Up To Russia Over 25 Years

By Anne Applebaum

[Washington Post](#), October 18, 2014

Looking back over the past quarter-century, it isn’t easy to name a Western policy that can truly be described as a success. The impact of Western development aid is debatable. Western interventions in the Middle East have been disastrous.

But one Western policy stands out as a phenomenal success, particularly when measured against the low expectations with which it began: the integration of Central Europe and the Baltic States into the European Union and NATO. Thanks to this double project, more than 90 million people have enjoyed relative safety and relative prosperity for more than two decades in a region whose historic instability helped launch two world wars.

These two “expansions,” which were parallel but not identical (some countries are members of one organization but not the other), were transformative because they were not direct leaps, as the word “expansion” implies, but slow negotiations. Before joining NATO, each country had to establish civilian

control of its army. Before joining the European Union, each adopted laws on trade, judiciary, human rights. As a result, they became democracies. This was “democracy promotion” working as it never has before or since.

But times change, and the miraculous transformation of a historically unstable region became a humdrum reality. Instead of celebrating this achievement on the 25th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall, it is now fashionable to opine that this expansion, and of NATO in particular, was mistaken. This project is incorrectly “remembered” as the result of American “triumphalism” that somehow humiliated Russia by bringing Western institutions into its rickety neighborhood. This thesis is usually based on revisionist history promoted by the current Russian regime — and it is wrong.

For the record: No treaties prohibiting NATO expansion were ever signed with Russia. No promises were broken. Nor did the impetus for NATO expansion come from a “triumphalist” Washington. On the contrary, Poland’s first efforts to apply in 1992 were rebuffed. I well remember the angry reaction of the U.S. ambassador to Warsaw at the time. But Poland and others persisted, precisely because they were already seeing signs of the Russian revanchism to come.

When the slow, cautious expansion eventually took place, constant efforts were made to reassure Russia. No NATO bases were placed in the new member states, and until 2013 no exercises were conducted there. A Russia-NATO agreement in 1997 promised no movement of nuclear installations. A NATO-Russia Council was set up in 2002. In response to Russian objections, Ukraine and Georgia were, in fact, denied NATO membership plans in 2008.

Meanwhile, not only was Russia not “humiliated” during this era, it was given de facto “great power” status, along with the Soviet seat on the U.N. Security Council and Soviet embassies. Russia also received Soviet nuclear weapons, some transferred from Ukraine in 1994 in exchange for Russian recognition of Ukraine’s borders. Presidents Clinton and Bush both treated their Russian counterparts as fellow “great power” leaders and invited them to join the Group of Eight — although Russia, neither a large economy nor a democracy, did not qualify.

During this period, Russia, unlike Central Europe, never sought to transform itself along European lines. Instead, former KGB officers with a clearly expressed allegiance to the Soviet system took over the state in league with organized crime, seeking to prevent the formation of democratic institutions at home and to undermine them abroad. For the past decade, this kleptocratic clique has also sought to re-create an empire, using everything from cyberattacks on Estonia to military invasions of Georgia and now Ukraine, in open violation of that 1994 agreement — exactly as the Central Europeans feared.

Once we remember what actually happened over the past two decades, as opposed to accepting the Russian regime’s version, our own mistakes look different. In 1991, Russia was no longer a great power in either population or economic terms. So why didn’t we recognize reality, reform the United Nations and give a Security Council seat to India, Japan or others? Russia did not transform itself along European lines. Why did we keep pretending that it had? Eventually, our use of the word “democracy” to describe the Russian political system discredited the word in Russia itself.

The crisis in Ukraine, and the prospect of a further crisis in NATO itself, is not the result of our triumphalism but of our failure to react to Russia’s aggressive rhetoric and its military spending. Why didn’t we move NATO bases eastward a decade ago? Our failure to do so has now led to a terrifying plunge of confidence in Central Europe. Countries once eager to contribute to the alliance are now afraid. A string of Russian provocations unnerve the Baltic region: the buzzing of Swedish airspace, the kidnapping of an Estonian security officer.

Our mistake was not to humiliate Russia but to underrate Russia's revanchist, revisionist, disruptive potential. If the only real Western achievement of the past quarter-century is now under threat, that's because we have failed to ensure that NATO continues to do in Europe what it was always meant to do: deter. Deterrence is not an aggressive policy; it is a defensive policy. But in order to work, deterrence has to be real. It requires investment, consolidation and support from all of the West, and especially the United States. I'm happy to blame American triumphalism for many things, but in Europe I wish there had been more of it.

Islamic State's Evil Highlights The Compassion Of Its Victims

By Stephanie Saldaña

[Washington Post](#), October 19, 2014

In the past two months, the world has watched helplessly as the Islamic State released four videos of foreign captives being beheaded in Syria. Much has been said about what we can learn about evil from these videos. Not enough has been said about what we can learn about good.

The first video, of James Foley's beheading, appeared Aug. 19. The images were ubiquitous in newspapers and on social media. Foley, dressed in an orange jumpsuit, was on his knees. A masked man held a knife to Foley's throat. On recordings, we heard the executioner speak in a British accent, warning that Steven Sotloff, an American freelance journalist, would be next.

More videos followed. Sotloff was murdered in September. Then David Haines, followed by Alan Henning. Though the Islamic State had long been carrying out public executions, the Internet expanded "public" to a horrifying new dimension. Now a single video could terrify millions, and there was evidence the tactic was working: In a recent poll, 94 percent of Americans said that they had heard about the beheadings.

Only with the latest video, showing the death of Henning and the appearance of the 26-year-old American aid worker Abdul-Rahman Kassig as the next potential victim, did I realize the message of terror was backfiring. These videos weren't making me afraid. They were giving me hope.

The evil, so potent in the first video, remained static. With each new version, we learned nothing new about it. The man, now known to the world as "Jihadi John," looked the same. The orange jumpsuit remained the same, as did the knife, the method of killing, the desert. That English accent designed to chill us.

But each time the good was different. We learned that Foley, in addition to being a journalist, was a devout Catholic who once taught inner-city kids. In Syria, he raised money to buy an ambulance for a hospital. His kindness did not stop while he was in captivity, where he shared blankets and food rations. In a letter home, he urged his grandmother to take her medicine.

We met Sotloff and read his article on desperate civilians in Aleppo who could not afford bread or fuel. It opened with a 12-year-old boy chopping wood for his family, an incident Sotloff captured because he had learned to speak the boy's native language — Arabic. Testimonies emerged that Sotloff, who was Jewish and the grandson of Holocaust survivors, fasted on Yom Kippur in captivity.

With Haines, we met a humanitarian worker supplying tents and food to refugees. With Henning, we were introduced to a British taxi driver who took unpaid leave to deliver aid with his Muslim friends. Many media outlets stopped showing images from the videos. Instead, we saw Henning's smiling face as he held a Syrian child in his arms.

So when Kassig — known as Peter to his friends — appeared as next in line to die, we were not surprised to learn that he is remarkable. A former Army Ranger, he founded his aid organization on a

shoestring budget, smuggling supplies across the Syrian border. He used his first-aid training to teach Syrians to heal wounds. He wrote to his parents from captivity: "If I do die, I figure that at least you and I can seek refuge and comfort in knowing that I went out as a result of trying to alleviate suffering and helping those in need."

We have always known that such heroes exist. We just don't often find them in the news. They are journalists who bear witness to suffering, even as they fall under shelling. They are aid workers who deliver flour across checkpoints. They join other unknown heroes — parents trying to feed their kids in wartime, teachers trying to hold classes. They stop at nothing: If there is no ambulance, they buy one; no doctor, they train one; no voice, they become one. They are hope, in places where we have long since ceased to believe hope is possible.

We have no power over whether the Islamic State will release more videos. But we can control what we choose to learn from them. Let them be reminders not of how much evil is in the world but of how much good.

Liberty, Equality Aren't Mutually Exclusive

By Danielle Allen

[Washington Post](#), October 19, 2014

Our country is in trouble. Congress's approval rating hovers near its lowest level since Gallup polling began, social protest rates are as high as they've been since the 1960s and the least among us — poor African Americans — are worse off than a decade ago. These are indicators of democracy running off the rails. To them one might add the stagnation of earnings for most Americans and a new regime of surveillance, wedded to ever-extending bureaucratic regulation.

One cause of our trouble is that we have come to believe that liberty and equality are in conflict, and this affects our policy debates. This misunderstanding began in reaction to Marx, took hold during the Cold War and found new strength in today's libertarianism. But it's wrong — and until we return to understanding how liberty and equality reinforce each other, we're not going to solve our problems.

For millennia, political thinkers understood equality and liberty as concepts that provided mutual support. The ancient Athenians, who invented formal democracy, also conjured up the concepts of "equality before the law" and "an equal right to speak." They opened political participation to all men regardless of economic status, while naming naval vessels things such as Eleutheria, or "Freedom." The republican citizenry of ancient Rome conducted its politics under the banner of "equal liberty" and celebrated a mixed constitution that, as Cicero wrote, had "enough power in the magistracies, enough authority in the advice given by leading citizens, and enough liberty in the people." For a time, that mixed constitution brought "equality," "something free men are hardly able to do without for very long," as he put it. The United States' founding similarly drew liberty and equality together. In Abraham Lincoln's formulation, the new nation was "conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal."

The obvious flies in the nectar — slavery and patriarchy — actually reinforce these conceptual points. Those who were not equal were not free and vice versa.

Among citizen men, in Athens, Rome and America, equality and liberty were concepts understood to support and sustain each other. Bonds of political and social equality among the citizens were necessary to forge institutions that would protect each individually from domination by the others and all together from domination by external powers.

Up through the early 19th century, the search for definitions of popular government and the welfare of the people (or *salus populi*, to quote Cicero and Locke) yielded a diversity of approaches to equality. The ancient Athenians, for instance, and the early modern Americans, focused on political and social equality. The French cared about both of those but also pursued equalizing economic policies. There was, in short, a centuries-long fluidity of analysis around the concepts of liberty and equality — but also a basic orientation toward their fundamental harmony.

This disappeared with the rise of communism. Marx's famous words, "A spectre is haunting Europe," introduced an age that assimilated the belief that liberty and equality stand opposed. That age is with us still in the form of contemporary libertarianism.

In the "Communist Manifesto" of 1848 Marx wrote: "The proletariat will use its political supremacy to wrest, by degrees, all capital from the bourgeoisie, to centralize all instruments of production in the hands of the state Of course, in the beginning this cannot be effected except by means of despotic inroads on the rights of property and on the conditions of bourgeois production." Over half a century, the question of the meaning of equality and its connection to liberty came to turn entirely around a definition understood to require the equalization of property through forceful re-appropriation.

In this country, as the argument against socialism and communism gathered force, the battle was explicitly cast as a contest between equality and liberty by thinkers such as William Graham Sumner, the late 19th-century chair of political economy at Yale University. He wrote in an argument against socialism: "Let it be understood that we cannot go outside of this alternative: liberty, inequality, survival of the fittest; not-liberty, equality, survival of the unfittest."

By the Cold War, both communists and libertarians structured their ideas, to an important degree, around the tenet that there is "an Eternal Conflict" between liberty and equality, to quote the title of a 1960 article from the *Freeman*, a publication of the Foundation for Economic Education. Iconic thinkers on the right adopted the theme and built economic theories around it: Ludwig von Mises, Friedrich Hayek and Milton Friedman. But liberals and thinkers on the left — Isaiah Berlin, John Rawls and Ronald Dworkin — also assumed a basic opposition between liberty and equality, even if they sought to undo it.

The stakes of this conceptual error are significant. We might, for instance, view our partisan gridlock as the sad result of a conceptual error applied over long duration. The Democratic Party, which now wears the mantle of equality — if any party does — thinks it cannot in a full-throated way befriend liberty. The Republican Party, which wants to style itself the party of liberty, thinks it can give no quarter to equality. But these ideals belong together like hand and glove. If the command economy was an extreme political form, so too is the libertarian counter-vision.

It's now 25 years since the Berlin Wall fell — long past time, in other words, to dismantle the second wall established by a putative opposition between liberty and equality. We are overdue for a return to the task of ascertaining how those two concepts work in tandem, and what institutional forms can best sustain them as the twinned ideals that they are.

Our own political tradition gives us the resources for doing that, beginning with the Declaration of Independence. I would urge us all to renew our education there, diving afresh into the meaning of equality, and discovering just how it can live harmoniously with liberty.

WILMINGTON NEWS JOURNAL STORIES

Downstate Delaware's Hidden Heroin Epidemic

By Adam Taylor

[Wilmington \(DE\) News Journal](#), October 19, 2014

Southern Delaware has a bigger heroin problem than does its larger neighbor to the north, state and local police say. But when an addict hits bottom here, he or she could be offered a tent rather than a bed in a halfway house.

Treatment services are sparse, requiring addicts hitch rides or drive 30 miles to counseling sessions and support group meetings. There are no state-funded detox or inpatient rehabs downstate, as there are in New Castle County. And experts say there is a culture of denial among residents in Kent and Sussex counties about the widespread abuse of heroin.

"A lot of it has to do with the rural culture in which people don't reach beyond their inner circles or families to find ways to solve their problems," says Joseph Connor, director of the Addictions Coalition of Delaware. "They solve them internally."

William Bethard is a lifelong Sussex County resident who entered the vortex of opiate abuse at 18 when he got hooked on prescription-opiate Percocet pills. He snorted his first bag of heroin on the Fourth of July three or four years ago (he can't remember which) while working in the kitchen of an Italian restaurant in Rehoboth Beach.

Bethard went outside, higher than he'd ever gotten on pills, and watched the fireworks display. He had never been happier.

But his life quickly slid toward the abyss. He began burglarizing homes to feed his habit. He lived in a rundown hotel in Rehoboth, even slept in the woods behind the Rehoboth Kmart.

He lost his mother's trust after stealing her boyfriend's credit card to buy Christmas presents for his drug dealer's family – a \$2,000 bill for a flat-screen TV, a bicycle and an X-box. The dealer traded an equal amount of heroin.

In September, the 24-year-old had strung together a nine-month stint of staying clean by spending 120 days in Sussex County Correctional Institution and an additional 150 days in court-mandated rehab in New Castle County.

Once that was done, though, he had nowhere to go.

24 year-old William Bethard tells a story of a road to the bottom and the struggles to get clean sober from a heroin addiction in Sussex County.

Ten days later Bethard walked into the A.C.E. Center, a resource facility in Seaford for Sussex County residents who are down on their luck for a variety of reasons. Bethard thought he might get a referral to a halfway house, maybe a voucher for a hotel.

He was taken aback by the center's approach for handling the typical homeless person's needs: a tent and a stump speech from Executive Director Jim Martin about finding a thick patch of woods outside the town limits where he wouldn't be rousted by the police.

"That's how we do it in Sussex County," said Martin, noting that the center often holds events at which tents for the homeless are donated. "We work with what we have and engage in direct action when we have to help people."

Fortunately for Bethard, a group of Christian outreach volunteers led by John Rittenhouse walked into the A.C.E. Center before Martin handed over the tent. Rittenhouse started the group Shift Destiny

because, after his son became a heroin addict and was sentenced to prison for a series of drug crimes, he wanted to help others avoid his boy's fate.

"I learned that I can't help my son – only he can do that," Rittenhouse said. "But I can try to help another father's son."

Rittenhouse's son, from Seaford, is a lot like Bethard. He turns 25 today, is in prison for burglary and other charges and is scheduled to soon enter Gateway Foundation, the same Delaware City rehab Bethard went to.

The Shift Destiny volunteers allowed Bethard to stay in their homes, and their charity allowed him a safe place to stay when he was in the fragile stages of early recovery.

Bethard later arranged to stay with a cousin in Lewes, and that's where he is today – working on a family farm and attending three 12-step meetings a week. He has been free from heroin for nearly 10 months.

"I got tired of the monotony of addiction," he said. "I just felt like I was always under it's thumb. Today I feel good. I'm finally optimistic about my future."

John Rittenhouse, of Seaford, has found help in dealing with his son's heroin addiction through his work with Shift Destiny church. His son is currently serving prison time for drug related crimes.

Starts in WilmingtonPolice calls rise rapidly in Kent and Sussex

Much of the heroin in Kent and Sussex counties comes from Wilmington, Delaware State Police spokesman Paul Shavack said. A downstate addict in Kent and Sussex counties has to pay \$10 to \$15 for a single bag that costs, on average, \$5 to \$10 in New Castle County, he said.

Bethard said a lot of his contacts, which he described as "a little gang, like a batch of ruffians," used to make the run to Wilmington to buy heroin and re-sell it in Sussex County.

He said the lack of visible drug activity downstate is an illusion.

"The only difference between Wilmington and down here is we're spread apart a little bit," he said. "The same amount of heroin is here. We just don't have a bunch of corners you can stand on. Everyone just sits in their cars instead."

"The only difference between Wilmington and down here is we're spread apart a little bit. The same amount of heroin is here. We just don't have a bunch of corners you can stand on. Everyone just sits in their cars instead."

William Bethard, 24, who used to make the run to Wilmington to buy heroin and re-sell it in Sussex County

Responses by police departments throughout the state for heroin-related activities exploded in Kent and Sussex counties in 2012 because opiate addicts switched to heroin when authorities cracked down on Percocet and Oxycontin, making those drugs too expensive.

From 2012 to 2013, state police say, increases in police responses were higher downstate than upstate. Departments responded to 125 percent more heroin calls in Kent County and 70 percent more in Sussex in that time period. The jump in New Castle County was 56 percent.

As of Oct. 1, the amount of responses in 2014 in Sussex County have already exceeded 2013's total, Shavack said. Ocean View Police Chief Kenneth McLaughlin said he's not surprised.

"I saw crack cocaine blow through our small, rural communities in the '80s and how incredibly widespread and damaging it was," McLaughlin said. "Eventually it waned, but I'm not seeing the same waning trend with heroin. It seems like with each passing day, it's getting stronger."

Earlier this month, a Selbyville-area mother was arrested after her 4-year-old daughter took 249 bags of heroin to a day care center and started handing it out, thinking they were packets of candy.

"Heroin is everywhere in this area, from the swamp to the sea," Selbyville Police Chief W. Scott Collins said.

Lacking servicesDownstate detox coming

Forty-one percent of overdose deaths in Delaware from all substances, including alcohol, have taken place in Kent and Sussex counties this year, according to state statistics.

Pauline Powell of Lewes started an Attack Addiction chapter in Sussex County because her 36-year-old son has struggled with heroin and other drugs since he was a teenager. Today he's buying Suboxone on the street – a drug supposed to help addicts detox from opiates, but is often abused.

Powell says Sussex County desperately needs a detox center and an inpatient rehab so residents don't have to go upstate for treatment.

"Not only more services, but more choices are needed," she said.

A downstate detox is on the way, Delaware Health and Social Services Secretary Rita Landgraf said. She hopes it will be open in January and wants it to be near the Kent-Sussex line to serve both counties. The 16-bed facility would allow addicts to stay for several days, and would also have more beds for 23-hour observations to assess treatment needs.

Connections Community Support Programs has been awarded the contract to run the detox and is looking for a site now, company CEO Cathy McKay said.

Connections has downstate facilities – in Smyrna, Dover, Millsboro and Seaford – that offer medication-assisted and outpatient treatments. Because of the exploding demand from addicts trying to get off heroin, Connections may expand those services, so she sees the need for a detox.

In the past three months, Connections' Millsboro facility admitted 144 new clients. They get 10 new referrals a day. While Connections used to mostly serve a mix of people with problems with alcohol, cocaine or methamphetamine, now most of the clients are heroin addicts.

"We could have admitted 144 more if we had the capacity," McKay said. "There was a belief when we started that facility three years ago that there was less of a problem there than other places, but that has turned out not to be true. There has been a real increase in heroin addiction that started from prescription opioid addiction."

At Gaudenzia on West 10th Street in Wilmington, half the clients seeking rehab are from downstate, the company's Division Director Steve Blank said. The facility has 16 beds for young adults who get inpatient drug and alcohol treatment for up to six months. There are another 16 beds that are used for people who have completed treatment and are waiting for transitional housing opportunities to open up or for those who are waiting for a bed at a rehab to become available.

About 55 people have been admitted into the facility this year, Blank said. Seventy-five percent have successfully completed treatment. Of those, 95 percent leave Gaudenzia with a job lined up. Many of those jobs are in New Castle County, Blank said.

"Because there isn't a lot offered [downstate] and there are more resources upstate, most of the people who come to us from Kent and Sussex counties wind up staying in the Wilmington area," he said.

Sussex County has felt the impact with the rise of heroin entering the illegal drug markets of small rural communities. Law enforcement, treatment center and addicts all struggle to overcome the drugs ramification on society.

Barriers for addictsStigma and even religious beliefs

Powell said she hopes the Attack Addiction chapter will help increase awareness of the heroin problem, as well as to destigmatize the problem so more addicts will seek help.

But several barriers exist that make those goals more difficult than in New Castle County, she said.

Mandell Much, clinical director of Aquila, a treatment center for adolescents in Georgetown, said the culture of self-reliance makes addictions treatment difficult.

"Many families think they'll just figure it out, manage it or live with it," Much said. "They don't say, 'We need help.'"

Addictions Coalition's Connor, a 30-year Sussex County resident, said some residents' religious beliefs also can get in the way of addicts getting well.

"Certain sectarian organizations don't ascribe to treatment," Connor said. "Having faith and spirituality is helpful, but addiction can't just be prayed away."

Transportation issue 90-minute one-way trips

There are many hard-core heroin addicts in Sussex County who don't drive, which makes it tough to get treatment if they decide to get clean, Connor said.

"Effective public transportation in Sussex County is minimal at best," he said.

That's why Martin, the director of the A.C.E. Center, considers used bicycles to be as meaningful a donation as tents. "If you don't have a car in Sussex County, you're dead in the water," he said.

For some counselors at Aquila, that often means picking up their clients and bringing them back to Georgetown, Clinical Director April Lathbury said. A typical route has a counselor leaving the Georgetown office to pick up one client in Bethany Beach, another in Lewes, a third in Harbeson, then back to the office for a group session. The trip can take more than 90 minutes each way.

Counselor Julie Landis said some parents try to use distance traveled as a reason to forgo help for their children. If that happens, she does home visits.

"Life in Sussex County, you don't really blink about driving 20 minutes to go to the grocery store or the movies or anything like that," Landis said. "The parents will use that as an excuse sometimes to not engage in treatment. So having community-based treatment allows us to move past those excuses and be in the home and really address what the real issues are."

One 23-year-old Dagsboro woman who has been free from heroin for several months said she went to treatment in New Castle County because there are more Narcotics Anonymous Meetings to choose from. She stays in New Castle County from Friday night to Sunday afternoon, attending a week's worth of meetings in a weekend.

Kris Arway of Millsboro said her 23-year-old son had to go to Florida to stay clean for 60 days. The state of treatment is so bad in Sussex County that an employee at one treatment center encouraged her to buy Suboxone off the street until there was treatment space for her son.

"So that's what I did," she said.

Arway has been to both of Attack Addiction's Sussex chapter meetings. She hopes to help make a difference before people like her son die from heroin overdoses.

"We have an opportunity to change the way addiction is addressed in southern Delaware, but we have to open our eyes down here," she said. "I miss my son's dry wit, his heart of gold, his contagious laugh. But I'm not naive. I know I might never see them again."

Reporters Esteban Parra and Sean O'Sullivan contributed to this story.

Delaware Ramps Up Ebola Preparations

By Jen Rini

[Wilmington \(DE\) News Journal](#), October 19, 2014

Delaware has always crowed about being in the sweet spot of the East Coast, between Washington, D.C., and New York.

But when it comes to the deadly Ebola virus, that might not be a good thing – because so many people travel through Delaware in route to one city or the other.

That means Ebola could be traveling through the state, too. But Rita Landgraf, secretary of the Delaware Department of Health and Social Services, stopped short of saying the First State is likely to have an Ebola case.

“It’s hard to predict. It’s not like our hurricane,” said Landgraf. “We have no precedent that has been in the United States relative to Ebola. We can’t predict if it will hit or not.”

With two Texas nurses infected with Ebola after being exposed to a patient there, Delaware hospitals and health care organizations are ramping up and fine-tuning plans for how to handle any suspected cases in the First State.

Christiana Care Hospital expects it would get only one or two patients as opposed to dozens – and none in the immediate future.

“We do have the window of time where we are really actively working on getting people trained so they can take care of patients,” said Dr. Marci Drees, infection prevention officer and hospital epidemiologist.

Among the precautions taken at hospitals statewide:

- Beebe Healthcare already has put a test patient through the emergency room process to check readiness. “We didn’t tell the staff,” said Marcy Jack, vice president of quality, safety and risk management at Beebe Healthcare. “We had someone present [with symptoms] to see if the correct questions for detection were asked. We pretty much have an emergency notification tree so communication can happen quickly.”

- Christiana Health Care System nurses and staff are screening patients at all emergency departments for travel histories if they show any symptoms consistent with Ebola, such as fever and stomach pains. Fewer than five were identified as worrisome. All had been to Africa, but only one had traveled to the affected regions. Each patient was taken out of the waiting room, put in a private room and evaluated by health care staff in basic protective equipment. Ebola was ruled out in each case.

Said Drees: “I would rather have 100 false alarms than any patient slip through.”

- Bayhealth Kent General in Dover acted quickly when a Liberian child was admitted for possible exposure to the infectious disease Oct. 4. Ebola was almost immediately ruled out due to travel screening questions.

- New Castle County’s Emergency Medical Services units always use protection procedures established for the HIV and AIDS epidemic, designed to prevent any contact with infected blood. Their teams use personal protective equipment, especially gloves, every day and sanitize ambulances with bleach. With the threat of Ebola, the unit’s 911 communication centers are asking additional questions about travel history as they process calls, and staff are required to use extra precautions when inserting intravenous needles and collecting blood, said Larry Tan, chief of the unit.

After two healthcare workers in Texas contracted Ebola, paramedics in Delaware are taking extra precaution to deal with any possible infected patients. 10/17/14

While one Texas man has died from Ebola and two of his nurses have gotten sick, the United States is not in the throes of an epidemic like West Africa, where 4,500 people have died. The World Health Organization has predicted 10,000 new cases a week in the next month, and many of those will be outside West Africa because people move around so much in the modern world.

Public concern was heightened last week by stories about the conditions in which the Texas nurses worked. They had to tape their protective garments closed while dealing with projectile vomiting and

explosive diarrhea. Clothing and bedding soiled by human waste and body fluids piled up in a room. Health officials suspect the nurses were exposed when they took off their protective suits.

After that report surfaced, state and federal officials took action. President Obama named former Vice President Chief of Staff Ron Klain to coordinate the nation's response to Ebola.

And the state asked all Delaware health care organizations to use WHO guidelines, which include having health care workers supervised while putting on and taking off protective gear. While some Delaware hospitals did use the WHO method, others relied on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommendations suggested by the state in August – or older plans put in place for protection from HIV or the H1N1 swine flu virus.

"I know fear is out there," added Leslie Verucci, president of the Delaware Nurses Association, who compared the public fear to the panic that followed the number of HIV and AIDS cases increasing in the 1980s.

Verucci said hospitals need to ensure the safety of their health care workers when dealing with the violent symptoms of Ebola.

"I believe this opened everyone's eyes," Verucci said. "Someone who is felt to have not done anything wrong still was contaminated somehow."

Avoiding human error

The Ebola virus is spread person-to-person through direct contact with infected bodily fluids such as blood, urine, sweat, semen, breast milk and feces. Like HIV, Ebola can be spread through cuts, sexual intercourse or if infected bodily fluids get into a person's eyes, nose or mouth.

While the infection is not airborne, if an Ebola patient sneezes on someone and the fluid touches a person's eyes, nose or mouth, it can move through the mucus membranes to infect the person contaminated. The same is true if the saliva of a coughing Ebola patient moves through membranes of another person.

The virus can live outside the body for a couple of hours on a surface such as a countertop, but up to six days in fluid, such as blood. Household cleaners like bleach will kill it.

The threat of such infection, however, depends on many things – including the symptoms of the already infected person.

A fever is the first sign that a person is infectious, but that's also when the virus is least likely to be passed to someone else, said Dr. Karyl Rattay, director of the state's Division of Public Health. As the disease progresses to severe vomiting, diarrhea and hemorrhaging, the infection is more virulent, more present in the body and more likely to infect someone else if exposed.

It can take as little as two days before a person shows symptoms, or up to 21 days.

All state cases of Ebola will be tracked by the state Department of Health and Social Services in concert with the Division of Public Health, and Landgraf will provide alerts to health organizations and citizens. The Department of Health will work with the Delaware Emergency Management Agency and the Department of Safety and Homeland Security as it would with any emergency disaster planning, Landgraf said.

While isolating the infection is the first order of business, "we also want to communicate effectively so the public is able to protect themselves," Landgraf said. "But the last thing we want to do is enhance any kind of panic."

She said she has full confidence that area hospitals, including Nemours/Alfred I. duPont Hospital for Children, St. Francis, Nanticoke, Beebe, Christiana Care and Bayhealth, are ready.

"They are prepared to take patients," Landgraf said. "You have to plan for the worst and hope for the best ... I'm confident that we have a communication system with our health systems on an ongoing basis. If anything shifts, we will know that and we will act accordingly."

If a suspected patient is identified, the state's operational plan calls for Homeland Security to enforce isolation in hospitals as well as at any private locations, such as apartments. Security teams would be responsible for disposing of medical waste safely and effectively, she said.

Hospitals already have waste disposal procedures in place that wouldn't be changed much if there was an Ebola patient. At Christiana, a third-party waste management company disposes of all hazardous waste, protective suits, equipment and cleaning supplies. With Ebola, Drees said cleaning staff will be hyper-vigilant in disinfecting and sanitizing the entire room, using as much protective equipment as possible.

Stringent precautions with blood samples also are in place. Patients who have returned from Africa routinely have blood tests for malaria and typhoid fever. Now, Drees said, lab workers and nurses will do as much testing as they can in a suspected patient's room. The samples would be kept separate from the general lab and packaged securely.

The state is identifying "alternative care sites" across Delaware that could be used in an overcapacity situation, but Landgraf wouldn't speak to the type of sites being considered or where they are. At a minimum, these sites would need to have ample water supply and cleanliness procedures.

In case of a patient overflow or a case that the CDC would want to monitor, the state has identified additional CDC-specified hospitals in the area. The closest would be the National Institutes of Health facility in Bethesda, Maryland, where one of the Texas nurses was sent.

A shared responsibility

Community health providers, from emergency transport to urgent and primary care clinics, are being kept informed by the state.

There's already a heightened sense of awareness, said Tan.

At Christiana Care, infectious disease specialists are working toward being able to separate an entire wing for suspected patients, said Drees.

Having designated areas for nurses to safely and securely put on and take off their protective equipment is central to the design. Minimizing the number of staff members in contact with the patient is also important. The hospital doesn't want students, trainees or ancillary staff in contact with an infected patient, she said, noting that isolation rooms could be configured quickly.

In some ways, Ebola is less concerning than other diseases out there, Drees said. But even in a first-world medical system, the death rate from Ebola is unknown, so vigilance in preparation and training is paramount.

Beebe has been fine-tuning standard infection protocols for more than a month, said Jack. That included sending a test patient through the system. The hospital expects to be able to track any patient suspected of Ebola, including which staff member the patient came in contact with, and what equipment was used in treatment.

The registration area will be the first line of defense at Delaware hospitals, with staff working desks inquiring about symptoms and travel to Ebola-affected regions. Any suspicious patient would be moved immediately into isolation. All emergency-room patients will receive notices on Ebola urging them to contact a staff member if they have any symptoms.

"Isolation for Ebola there doesn't need to be a specialized setup per se, just a private room," Jack said. The hospital can turn any private patient room into an isolation room, she said.

Nurses and other health care staff are also constantly undergoing in-person and online training regarding the personal protective suits as well as how to treat infected patients. Beebe uses the WHO guidelines that require a supervisor present when changing suits, and asks workers to double-glove when carrying a patient or handling infected bodily fluids.

"It is very difficult to put the equipment on and off in a manner that is not exposing. Taking off equipment is the highest risk," Jack said.

Beebe has on hand gloves that extend over isolation gowns, respirator masks, face shields, head covers and extra-long shoe coverings – and most of it has been there for two months. The hospital requires all staff who come in contact with a patient to don a suit. It also asks visitors to do that.

"We have definitely made sure we have enough supplies," Jack said. "As far as getting more supplies, that's a daily fluctuation."

Colin Faulkner, director of public safety for Kent County, said that the standard gowns, face shield and gloves the EMS units have are enough to protect staff when they come in contact with HIV, hepatitis C or influenza patients.

He's not sure how easy it's going to be to secure enough WHO-certified protection suits, which offer double the protection of a standard infection-control suit. Tan said that the WHO suits can cost \$12 each if bought in bulk. Standard protective suits are around \$7. Right now, New Castle EMS only has a couple of dozen. Faulkner says he's waiting on more suits from the state Division of Public Health.

"Ebola, it's a scary possibility. It's a very scary possibility," Faulkner said. "I'm sure that it wasn't expected in Dallas. If we don't do our jobs and we don't do it right, we risk affecting a lot of people. You have to treat it almost like a loaded gun, with a very light trigger."

WILMINGTON NEWS JOURNAL EDITORIALS

Don't Wait For Heroin-addiction Solutions

[Wilmington \(DE\) News Journal](#), October 19, 2014

My husband and I became aware of the difficulty in obtaining services for a person with addictions in Sussex County, who was reaching out for help, when we tried to find services for a family member.

All the avenues we tried told us either there were no beds available or the wait for services was unrealistically long. My awareness was heightened further while waiting from 8 a.m. until 3 p.m., after a two-hour drive, for our loved one to be admitted into the Kirkwood Detox Center. In addition to our own family's struggle to obtain services, the stories I heard when speaking with other individuals who were also waiting to be admitted into, or who had just been discharged from, Kirkwood lead me to the conclusion that services for individuals with addiction disease in Delaware were totally unacceptable.

Furthermore, the court's habit (pardon the pun) of incarcerating individuals with mental health and substance abuse issues without offering any form of treatment also should be examined in depth. Because of our personal experiences, I felt the need to raise community awareness to the problems of addiction and the raging heroin epidemic that is occurring in our state with the goal of effecting change for the better. The incident with the little only emphasizes how great that need is.

Thankfully, the outcome of that situation was no worse than it was.

After conversations with several officials, I was advised to check www.atTAcKaddiction.com, the website for a proactive group in New Castle County who were working on the same issues that we felt needed to be addressed.

As I believe joining forces with others speaks with a louder voice to effect change for the greater good, my husband and I attended several of the group's meetings and, with their blessing, started the Sussex County Chapter of atTAcK addiction. We can be contacted at: attackaddictionsussexde@comcast.net. All are welcome to our meetings on the third Wednesday of each month in Bethel U.M.C.'s Fellowship Hall, 129 W. Fourth St., Lewes, with doors opening at 6:30 p.m. Following a half-hour of fellowship, our meeting begins at 7 p.m. To date we have had two meetings with an average attendance of 20 people. Since starting the downstate group, many individuals have reached out to us, both in gratitude and expressing the need for more awareness and many more services in Sussex County.

The goals of atTAcK addiction, Sussex County, are to reduce the stigma attached to the disease of addiction, particularly with respect to heroin addiction; to bring more, and a wider variety, of effective choices of treatment, including a Sussex County Detox and Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Center; to increase awareness education within our schools, starting at an early age, to the dangers of alcohol and drug use; to raise community awareness of the heroin epidemic by breaking through the barriers of denial that exist here, which only serve to prevent change from happening; and to offer compassion and support to families who have lost a loved one to this disease and to those in recovery.

We believe that by working proactively with our state and local representatives that we can make a difference.

Pauline Powell is head of the Sussex County Chapter of Attack Addiction.

Legal Pot? Is That What We Really Want?

[Wilmington \(DE\) News Journal](#), October 19, 2014

S.J. Perelman, the humorist who wrote some of the Marx Brothers' zaniest lines, once said, "I don't know anything about medicine, but I do know what I like."

That, apparently, is the way many Delawareans feel, especially about marijuana. A majority of those polled are in favor of legalizing it. Legalizing it, not just decriminalizing it, but allowing the open sale and use of marijuana like any other consumer product. (Well, not just any consumer product. We imagine some of the marijuana legalization group would not mind banning sugary drinks and other fast foods.)

Marijuana decriminalization is long overdue. It does not make sense to put people in jail for what really is a minor offense. Public opinion is gathering behind a move to greatly reduce penalties on personal use of marijuana.

However, that is a short step. Legalization is the giant step that many are now advocating. Washington and Colorado went in that direction and many people think that is just fine.

There is more to legalization than just mild recreational use of pot. For example, medical questions still remain. Earlier this month a study in the journal *Addiction* pointed to strong evidence that chronic marijuana use can cause physical harm. This is not a "Reefer Madness" type of study, but one that looked at evidence over 20 years. It showed that people do not overdose from marijuana, but chronic use may alter brain structure and function. Part of the reason may be the fact that the THC content in marijuana has been increasing over the years. THC is the chemical that causes marijuana's psychological effects.

The upshot is that we still have a lot to learn about the long-term use of marijuana.

Here's where a lot of people invoke S.J. Perelman's rule of medicine. That may be well and good for an individual, but society should think about the consequences before throwing out all regulations.

Another point to consider is legal. Marijuana use, even medicinal use, is against federal law. If Delaware legalized marijuana growing and use, that does not mean Maryland, Pennsylvania and New Jersey would follow suit. A Delaware pot tax might make a few legislators happy for a spell, but legalization would create a host of law enforcement problems here.

The point is that the decriminalization-legalization issue is not settled. We should have a debate. We should hear from all sides, especially health officials.

As a society, we obviously need to make our drug laws rational. We have to think beyond clichés such as “we lost the war against drugs.” We have to start asking second-stage questions like “And then what?” Say Delaware legalized marijuana. Then what? Would we have an open, unregulated market? Age limits? Quantity limits? Who could grow it? Who could sell it? What about a tax? And what about any damage it would cause?

We may not like to be bothered with details. We may only care about a personal effect, but we should remember that there are always consequences.

In Overcoming Addiction, There Are No Shortcuts

By John F. Rittenhouse

[Wilmington \(DE\) News Journal](#), October 19, 2014

As parents of a heroin addict, we live a life never anticipated. We successfully raised three children, vacationed, worshiped together, enjoyed the good things together and loved family time. When our youngest son launched, we felt like “we made it” and focused on our future as a couple.

In early 2011, we learned our son had used Percocets and Oxycontin, leading to heroin. His needing money, followed by missing funds, credit cards, jewelry and other items opened our eyes that something was wrong. We cycled through the stages of shame, regret, anger and disbelief. After a year, some friends in the fight introduced a Narcotics Anonymous group where I reluctantly visited as I was ashamed, and felt like a failed father. But my wife and I were desperate for help. We went, we learned and we grew. If you are new to the fight, GO! Do not hesitate! NA circle provides perspective, folks who “get it” and information for the fight of “tough love.”

Equally, we found a support circle of praying friends inside our own church. At one point, we had six families impacted, and we supported and grew together. Talk to your pastor or priest. Find emotional, spiritual and family support networks for the battle ahead.

What have we learned? Heroin use is starting as young as 12, and 19 is the average age of new users. Percs and Oxys are leading the path to heroin use. Heroin is cheap and abundant in Delaware. Recovery rate is low. Life expectancy, five years. The clock is ticking. Time is not your friend. Let him or her hit “their bottom” quickly as possible!

Getting our son hungry, homeless and helpless was how we had to love him. But not in anger, nor in rage, but always assuring him, “We love you. We forgive you and are ready when you are ready to get help.” There are NO shortcuts. The risk is high. The end is death or recovery. Period. Today our son is alive, sitting in a correction facility, at bottom, and ready to enter the Gateway program. Not the path we would have chosen, but thankful he is still in the fight.

VICE PRESIDENTIAL *NEWS CLIPS*

PRODUCED FOR THE OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT

TO: THE VICE PRESIDENT AND STAFF
DATE: SUNDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2014 -- 7:00 AM EDT

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BIDEN IN THE NEWS

Iraq Fills Out Unity Government, Now Ready To Take On ISIS?

By Susannah George

[McClatchy](#), October 18, 2014

BAGHDAD Iraq's parliament has approved a series of key ministers after a month of wrangling, completing the formation of a unity government as the country's military and security forces struggle to push back the Islamic State.

Publicly, most Iraqi parliamentarians called the move a step in the right direction, but others dismissed the appointments as politically motivated and the appointees themselves as inexperienced.

"I think it's a good sign" says Mowaffak al-Rubaie, a longtime Shia statesman currently representing Baghdad in Parliament and a former security advisor to former Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki.

"Now that Mr. Abadi has completed his cabinet, the government can function," Rubaie explained.

Shortly after being sworn in as Prime Minister in September, Haider al-Abadi's initial nominations to the ministries of the Interior and Defense were rejected. The ensuing political deadlock fueled concerns that Abadi would be unable to bring about political reconciliation between Iraq's Sunnis and Shia, a key requirement for U.S. aid to the country's floundering military in the fight against the Islamic State.

Sunni distrust of Maliki's Shia dominated government and his increasingly sectarian policies were seen as a one of the principal factors leading to the rise of the Islamic State in Iraq.

U.S. officials lauded the completion of the cabinet as critical to building a durable coalition to defeat the Islamic State.

"Significantly, this is the first time since 2010 that Iraq has had a full cabinet with security ministers confirmed by the Iraqi parliament," State Department spokeswoman Jen Psaki said.

Vice President Joe **Biden** phoned Abadi and discussed "the work ahead, including steps to rebuild Iraq's security forces and enlist all of Iraq's communities in the fight against the Islamic State," the White House said.

The Ministry of Interior went to Mohammed Salem al-Ghabban, a Shiite lawmaker with the controversial Badr Organization. Abadi's previous nominee for the post was Hadi al-Amiri, the head of Badr and the former minister of transport.

In an interview shortly after the nominations were announced, Al-Amiri said he was satisfied with the choice of al-Ghabban as Minister of Interior.

"He was my choice," Amiri said. "I told Abadi from day one it didn't have to be me, it could be anyone from Badr."

The Badr Organization's armed wing has been accused of an array of human rights abuses including sectarian killings.

A Sunni parliamentarian from Mosul, Khaled al-Obeidi, will now head up the Ministry of Defense. The choice of a politician from Mosul is a symbolically important move as the city was the first major Iraqi metropolis to fall under the control of the Islamic State when militants swept across northern Iraq in June.

"I see both appointments as weak," said one senior Iraqi politician from a powerful Shia bloc in parliament who requested anonymity in order to speak freely. "They're young, inexperienced and not that bright." The politician said those character traits were particularly concerning as the two positions are responsible for the nation's security forces at a time when the country is battling a radical insurgency.

As for what the appointments say about the future of Abadi's Prime Ministership, the senior politician described it as "not promising."

Iraq's parliament also approved a tourism minister, a women's affairs minister and a minister of immigration and displacement. Two Kurdish ministers were also sworn in, a move former Kurdish parliamentarian Mahmoud Othman described as important because it could signal more cooperation between Iraq's Kurdish region and the central government in Baghdad.

"When they took that oath that means they are now part of this government and so now I think they should start serious talks," Othman said in reference to ongoing budget disagreements between the Kurdistan Regional Government and Baghdad.

But, he relented, ultimately he saw all of Saturday's appointments as pure politics. "The qualification comes second," he said. "They are all capable of doing the job, but I don't think they will do it well."

How To See Vice President Joe Biden In Syracuse

By Mark Weiner

[Syracuse \(NY\) Post-Standard](#), October 18, 2014

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Vice President Joe **Biden**'s visit to Syracuse on Monday for a campaign rally with U.S. Rep. Dan Maffei will be open to the public with no tickets required, according to the Maffei campaign.

Biden will address supporters for Maffei, D-Syracuse, at noon Monday inside an airplane hangar at Syracuse Hancock International Airport.

Biden and Maffei are expected to deliver remarks about strengthening the middle class at Syracuse Landmark Aviation Hangar #113, 113 Tuskegee Road in Mattydale.

Signs and volunteers will direct visitors to free parking near the terminal on the south side of the airport, according to the Maffei campaign.

Previous Maffei campaign rallies at the same hangar in 2010 and 2012 with former President Bill Clinton attracted crowds of 800 to 1,000 people.

Biden, a 1968 graduate of Syracuse University's law school, plans to make one other stop in New York state on Monday. In the morning, he is scheduled to appear with New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo in New York City for an event to discuss infrastructure modernization.

Biden has been on the campaign trail for several weeks, helping Democrats facing tough battles in midterm elections. Political analysts and polls show Maffei is vulnerable in his re-election campaign against Republican John Katko of Camillus.

Several polls have shown Katko moving within striking distance of Maffei, trailing by 3 to 8 percentage points.

Vice President Biden Adds Duluth Stop To Minnesota Visit

[Brainerd \(MN\) Daily Dispatch](#), October 18, 2014

WASHINGTON – Vice President Joe **Biden**'s Minnesota trip next week will include a stop in Duluth, the White House said Friday.

Biden will be in Duluth for an event on domestic violence issues on Thursday, his press office confirmed. Details of the event were not immediately announced.

Also Thursday, he is expected to travel to Hibbing to stump for Democratic U.S. Rep. Rick Nolan, who is locked in a tight battle for re-election against Republican challenger Stewart Mills and Green Party candidate Skip Sandman.

No further details on the time or location of the Hibbing rally had been released as of late Friday.

Andrew Cuomo Campaigns Without Traditional Events, While Challenger Rob Astorino Crosses The State

By Glenn Blain, Kenneth Lovett

[New York Daily News](#), October 19, 2014

ALBANY — It's the noncampaign campaign.

While underdog Republican Rob Astorino criss-crosses the state in a desperate hunt for votes, Gov. Cuomo is running out the clock until Election Day — a Rose Garden strategy on steroids.

Take last week for example. Cuomo spent much of it promoting his new memoir. That included a flurry of national media sitdowns, interviews with local TV stations limited to the book, a book-signing, and a visit to “The Late Show” reading a David Letterman Top 10 list.

Cuomo also held a press briefing on state preparations for Ebola and staged an in-and-out, 24-hour visit to Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic in a nod to New York's Hispanic voters.

The trip was his third overseas dash in two months — he also swept into Israel and Afghanistan — after almost never leaving New York in 3 1/2 years. As for traditional campaign-style events, there was none, nor did he mention Astorino by name.

This week will open with more of the same. On Monday, Cuomo appears in Queens with Vice President **Biden** to “discuss infrastructure modernization.”

While Cuomo touted his book and left the state, Astorino descended on the South Bronx, where he danced with Hispanic seniors; delivered a speech calling for term limits; celebrated the Jewish holiday Sukkot in Brooklyn; stumped in Rochester, Westchester County and Long Island; and gave a whirlwind of radio interviews.

John Minchillo/AP

While Cuomo touted his book and left the state, Astorino (pictured) descended on the South Bronx, where he danced with Hispanic seniors; delivered a speech calling for term limits; celebrated the Jewish holiday Sukkot in Brooklyn; stumped in Rochester, Westchester County and Long Island; and gave a whirlwind of radio interviews.

At nearly every turn, he called Cuomo a coward for not agreeing to one-on-one televised debates.

“He's the imperial governor who wants nothing to do with the average person and it shows,” Astorino said.

He added that when he ran for reelection in 2013 as Westchester County executive, he campaigned heavily and debated his Democratic opponent five times despite leading in the polls.

“It's incumbent upon the incumbent to do that; otherwise, he loses touch with those he represents,” Astorino said.

Cuomo has held a few traditional campaign events in recent weeks — notably two Saturday bus tours highlighting women's issues, and a Sunday visit to black churches.

“The governor has been campaigning with voters every weekend while doing his day job,” said campaign spokesman Matt Wing. With a huge money advantage and a big lead, Cuomo signaled early on he would not conduct a traditional press-the-flesh campaign.

CBS

Cuomo also made a visit to ‘The Late Show’ reading a David Letterman Top 10 list.

Faced with a Democratic primary challenge from little-known Fordham law professor Zephyr Teachout, Cuomo did virtually no campaigning until the last week of the race. He refused to debate Teachout.

Unlike his schedule over the last month, which has been filled with government events and, last week, appearances for his book, Cuomo spent many days during the primary with no public events at all.

"It seems to be a blend of entitlement and fear," Teachout said.

Perhaps. But no political experts or analysts interviewed by the Daily News faulted Cuomo's approach, even while admitting it deprives the public of a true debate on issues facing the state.

"This is a 'Seinfeld' version of the governor's campaign. It is a campaign about nothing," former Assemblyman Richard Brodsky (D-Westchester) said. But, it's a "pretty sound strategy."

Romney Leads Scattered 2016 GOP Field, Clinton Still Dominates The Democratic Race

[ABC News](#), October 19, 2014

Hillary Clinton continues to hold a commanding lead in the potential Democratic field for president in 2016, while the GOP frontrunner in the latest ABC News/Washington Post poll is a familiar figure – but one not favored by eight in 10 potential Republican voters.

That would be Mitt Romney, supported for the GOP nomination by 21 percent of Republicans and Republican-leaning independents. That's double the support of his closest potential rival, but it also leaves 79 percent who prefer one of 13 other possible candidates tested, or none of them.

When Romney is excluded from the race, his supporters scatter, adding no clarity to the GOP free-for-all. In that scenario former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush, former Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee and Kentucky Sen. Rand Paul have 12 or 13 percent support from leaned Republicans who are registered to vote. All others have support in the single digits.

Were Romney to run again, he'd likely face some of the same challenges that dragged out the 2012 GOP contest. He's supported by only half as many "strong" conservatives as those who are "somewhat" conservative, 15 vs. 30 percent in this poll, produced for ABC by Langer Research Associates.

Huckabee, for his part, does somewhat better with Republican-leaning independents than with mainline Republicans, a potential problem in closed primaries. He also does better with women than with men; that's reversed for Paul.

DEMS – Clinton continues to dominate on the Democratic side, with 64 percent support. Still, there are some gaps in her support: It's 54 percent among men vs. 70 percent of women and

55 percent among those younger than 50 vs. 72 percent among those 50 and older. And she gets less support from Democratic-leaning independents, 53 percent, than from mainline Democrats, 69 percent.

Vice President Joe **Biden** and Sen. Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts have 13 and 11 percent support, respectively. **Biden** does better among those under 50, those with less education and nonwhites; Warren, among college graduates and whites.

It's early days for all this, of course; the 2016 election is two years away. But after the midterms just two weeks off, it'll be the next item on the dance card.

METHODOLOGY – This ABC News/Washington Post poll was conducted by telephone Oct. 9-12, 2014, in English and Spanish, among a random national sample of 1,006 adults, including landline and cell-phone-only respondents. Results among the 871 registered voters interviewed have a margin of sampling error of 4 points, including design effect.

The survey was produced for ABC News by Langer Research Associates of New York, N.Y., with sampling, data collection and tabulation by Abt-SRBI of New York, N.Y.

Post-ABC News Poll: Absent Mitt Romney, Who Can Claim The 2016 GOP Banner?

By Dan Balz

[Washington Post](#), October 19, 2014

When Mitt Romney managed to get about 25 percent support in the early polls against his 2012 Republican rivals, everyone asked, “What’s wrong with Mitt?” He was, after all, the presumed front-runner. Today, with a new Washington Post-ABC News poll showing something similar about 2016, the question could be, “What’s wrong with all the others?”

The survey tested Romney against the prospective field of 2016 GOP presidential candidates. Ann Romney told Maeve Reston of the Los Angeles Times last week that she and the Romneys’ sons are “done, done, done” with presidential politics after two failed campaigns. But for now, the former Massachusetts governor and 2012 nominee is at the top of the heap in the eyes of rank-and-file Republicans.

The Post-ABC poll found that 21 percent of Republicans or Republican-leaning independents say they favor the Romney as their 2016 nominee. That was almost double the 11 percent who named the person in second place, former Florida governor Jeb Bush.

Romney benefits as much or more from the fact that no one among the likely candidates has yet filled the vacuum he left behind. That he enjoys top billing among prospective 2016 GOP candidates says something about Romney but much more about the others in the unsettled field.

Romney enjoys a warm glow today in part because of what’s happened to President Obama since 2012. Remembered are attributes or statements that look better in retrospect than they did at the time. Forgotten or dismissed are some of the mistakes Romney made in that campaign, from “self-deportation” to “47 percent.”

With the assumption that Romney would not run again, the 2016 race always was going to look different than past Republican nominating contests. For the first time in a long time, there is neither an heir apparent (George H.W. Bush in 1988, Bob Dole in 1996, John McCain in 2008, Romney in 2012) nor a dominant first-time candidate (George W. Bush in 2000).

Republicans assumed their 2016 field collectively would be far stronger than the group who competed in 2012, which is now regarded as one of the weakest in modern times. That could still turn out to be the case, but so far no one has begun to break from the pack.

The Post-ABC poll highlights this. Taking Mitt and Ann Romney at their word that a third campaign is not in their future, this race is as wide open as it could be, at least in terms of early popular support.

Absent Romney, Jeb Bush leads with a mere 15 percent, Sen. Rand Paul (Ky.) is second at 12 percent, and former Arkansas governor Mike Huckabee is third at 11 percent — all within the five-point error margin.

After that, in descending order, are the single-digit candidates, all bunched between 8 and 6 percent: Rep. Paul Ryan (Wis.), Sen. Marco Rubio (Fla.), New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie, Ben Carson and Texas Gov. Rick Perry. Coming in below 5 percent are Sen. Ted Cruz (Tex.), former senator Rick Santorum (Pa.), Louisiana Gov. Bobby Jindal, Ohio Gov. John Kasich and, at 1 percent, Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker.

Bush’s support is fairly even through various demographic and economic groups. Huckabee is stronger among women than men, while Rand Paul is the opposite. Paul Ryan does better with Republicans who have college degrees or incomes over \$50,000 than he does with those without degrees and making less.

On perhaps the most important divide within the GOP, Bush does significantly better among Republicans who say they do not support the tea party, as befits his establishment pedigree. Huckabee and Paul do better with the much larger group of Republicans who say they back the tea party movement.

Any analysis of 2016 polls comes with the obvious caution: Given the number of candidates and the absence of a clear front-runner, these early measures are far from predictive. Beyond that, they can't measure the fundraising wherewithal or the political staying power each candidate could bring to a campaign. Because they are national surveys, they don't take into account strengths or weaknesses in the early states that winnow the field. Most significantly, they don't measure the quality of campaigning skills.

Examples abound from past campaigns to underscore those caveats.

Huckabee won the Iowa caucuses in 2008, but his campaign was always crippled by lack of money. Hillary Rodham Clinton had great national numbers in 2007 but always looked vulnerable in polls of Iowa Democrats. Perry is Exhibit A of the difference between how a candidate looks on paper and on the campaign trail.

If he decides to run, Bush should be able to raise the money needed, but he is at odds with his party's base on some key issues, and according to a recent Des Moines Register-Bloomberg Politics poll of Iowa Republicans, he comes in with just 4 percent support in the state whose caucuses kick off the process. The biggest question mark is whether he will even seek the nomination.

Others in the prospective field have even bigger question marks behind their names. Simply put, how many of the prospective candidates look better as this midterm election nears its conclusion than they did in the months right after the 2012 campaign? Readers can draw their own conclusions based on what they've seen so far.

On the Democratic side, there are no surprises. It's still Clinton vs. all others.

In the latest survey, 65 percent of Democrats and Democratic-leaning independents say they favor the former senator and secretary of state for the nomination. Vice President **Biden** is second at 13 percent, with Sen. Elizabeth Warren (Mass.), who has said repeatedly she has no intention of running, at 10 percent.

Although Clinton's support is strong through all demographic and economic groups, there are some variations of note. She enjoys far more support among women than men and stronger support among Democrats 50 or older rather than among those younger.

Clinton also wins demonstrably more support among white Christians than among those who say they have no religion. And she does better with white Democrats who do not have a college degree than with those who do. In that way, her profile differs from that of Obama, who has generally done better with voters who have college degrees and post-graduate degrees than those without.

That could prove significant in a general election. If that profile was to translate into her capturing a higher share of the white vote in a general election than Obama managed in 2012 while retaining the Obama coalition of minorities and well-educated whites, Republicans would be in trouble, unless they can offset it by doing better among non-white voters. First, however, they will have to find a candidate.

Farnsworth: Virginia Loves Romney

By Stephen J. Farnsworth

[Richmond \(VA\) Times-Dispatch](#), October 19, 2014

If Mitt Romney, the 2012 Republican presidential nominee, chooses to run for president again in 2016, he would be quite welcome in Virginia — more welcome, in fact, than many potential Republican candidates already designing their upcoming campaigns.

If Mitt Romney, the 2012 Republican presidential nominee, chooses to run for president again in 2016, he would be quite welcome in Virginia — more welcome, in fact, than many potential Republican candidates already designing their upcoming campaigns.

Indeed, in a hypothetical rematch this fall with President Barack Obama, a new statewide poll by the University of Mary Washington shows that the former Massachusetts governor would likely win the Old Dominion's Electoral College votes. Obama won the state two years ago by 4 percentage points, but the new survey shows a 2-point margin favoring Romney among registered voters.

In many ways, Virginia's Romney love should not be surprising. He spent a lot of time in the state during the 2012 general election campaign, and he coasted to victory in the Virginia GOP primary earlier that year. In addition, many Virginians favor politicians who have spent time in the private sector.

Romney's strengths are particularly notable given the other moderate Republicans with national profiles who also might be contemplating a 2016 presidential campaign. The UMW statewide survey of 1,000 adult residents conducted Oct. 1-6 found that 19 percent listed Romney as their favorite for the 2016 GOP nomination, as compared to 14 percent supporting New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie, 10 percent for former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush, and 8 percent for Sen. Rand Paul of Kentucky. U.S. Rep. Paul Ryan of Wisconsin, Romney's 2012 vice presidential running mate, and Sen. Marco Rubio of Florida were both at 5 percent in the survey and Sen. Ted Cruz of Texas came in at 4 percent.

The top rankings in the survey for Romney, Christie and Bush — all relatively moderate voices within the GOP — might spell bad news for conservative Republicans, many of whom supported Romney in 2012 and Sen. John McCain of Arizona in 2008 after more conservative presidential candidates dropped out. After the votes were counted in 2012, many conservatives insisted a more ideologically oriented campaign against Democrats would have been more successful than Romney's.

But the survey results suggest good news for the party's pragmatists: Conservative Republicans in Virginia nominated three of their own at a nomination convention last year and went on to lose all three statewide contests for the first time in more than 20 years.

Romney also is well-positioned as a compromise choice in a party divided among fiscal, religious and national security conservatives. He also was the second choice of 16 percent of Virginians surveyed, as compared to 8 percent who named Christie and 7 percent each selecting Bush, Paul and Ryan as their alternate preferences for the GOP nomination. More than one-third (35 percent) of those surveyed listed the former Massachusetts governor as their first or second choice, as compared to 22 percent who listed Christie as a top or second pick. Bush was third, with 17 percent of those surveyed naming him their first or second choice.

For the 2016 Democratic nomination, Hillary Clinton had a greater edge in Virginia over her party rivals in the survey than Romney did over his. Clinton had the support of 33 percent, as compared to 14 percent favoring Sen. Mark Warner of Virginia, who placed second, and 7 percent supporting Vice President Joe **Biden**, who ranked third in the poll.

The strength of Romney's appeal in Virginia has profound national implications. The Old Dominion is not just a "purple" state in its politics; it is also far more like America than are Iowa and New Hampshire,

the first caucus and primary states. With its liberal Northern Virginia, its evangelical Southside, its agricultural heartland in the Shenandoah Valley and its industrial urban core in Hampton Roads, Republicans around the nation should take Virginia's nomination preferences very seriously.

Stephen J. Farnsworth is professor of political science and director of the Center for Leadership and Media Studies at the University of Mary Washington. Contact him at sfarnswo@umw.edu.

Buzz: Jeb Bush Genuinely Undecided And Genuinely Considering 2016 Presidential Run

By Adam C. Smith

[Tampa Bay \(FL\) Times](#), October 19, 2014

Political junkies in Florida don't have to worry about the drama ending Nov. 4, because once the governor's race wraps up, another huge political question emerges: Will Jeb run in 2016?

Former Gov. Jeb Bush has said he will make up his mind by year's end and most signs suggest he is both genuinely undecided and genuinely considering it. Meanwhile, U.S. Sen. Marco Rubio appears more likely to run, though Bush's candidacy would seriously crimp his fundraising and political network.

The latest Tampa Bay Times/Bay News 9/UF Bob Graham Center Poll underscores how much Bush overshadows Rubio, at least among Florida voters who presumably know them better than any other Republicans.

Among potential Republican presidential contenders, here's how support among likely Florida voters broke down: 35 percent said they would support Bush; 21 percent Rubio; 13 percent "someone else"; 10 percent Kentucky Sen. Rand Paul; 7 percent New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie; and 6 percent Texas Gov. Rick Perry. Among just Republicans, Bush drew 36 percent support, followed by Rubio with 24 percent. Among Democrats, Bush had 34 percent support, followed by "someone else" with 17 percent; and Rubio with 13 percent.

Bush may be the GOP frontrunner in Florida, but even here he is no Hillary Clinton. Asked about likely Democratic presidential contenders, 67 percent said they would choose Clinton (including 69 percent of Democrats, 53 percent of Republicans and 64 percent of independents).

Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren drew support from 12 percent of likely voters (10 percent from Democrats), followed by Vice President Joe **Biden** with 7 percent.

The telephone survey of 781 registered Florida voters — all likely to vote in the November election — was conducted Oct. 7-12 for the Tampa Bay Times, Bay News 9 and News 13 of Orlando by the University of Florida's Bob Graham Center for Public Service and Bureau of Economic and Business Research. The poll, which included respondents using land lines and cellphones, has a margin of error of plus or minus 3.2 percentage points.

Bush's considerations

Two other Bush tidbits that could influence his presidential decisionmaking:

- A new Des Moines Register/Bloomberg Politics poll of likely voters in all-important Iowa found that Bush trailed Clinton by 7 percentage points, and that 32 percent of Iowans had a favorable view of the former Florida governor and 38 percent an unfavorable view.

- His wife, Columba, has been rumored to be wary of a presidential campaign, and in an interview with the Associated Press in Texas he addressed that as well as his mother's public skepticism about another Bush running for president:

"As it relates to my mom, my mom's been around the track ... she just believes that it's something that she doesn't want my family to go through, although she's changed her mind on that. So I'm marking her down to 'neutral, trending in a different direction' than she was," Bush said. "My wife is supportive, but

that doesn't mean that I don't understand the challenges that this brings. This is ultimately my decision, with as much consideration as I can to take into account the people that I really love."

Comedy wins

Stephen Colbert professes to be rooting for "Florida governor and python on Ecstasy Rick Scott," to win a second term, but on his show last week Colbert on Comedy Central said he understood why Crist insisted on bringing a fan to their televised debate.

"Based on that skin tone, I'd say his core temperature is 450 degrees. But why should Crist get to cool himself with a fan but Scott isn't allowed to control his temperature by lying on a chilled rock?"

Jon Stewart on The Daily Show went with more anatomically oriented humor in an eight-minute segment dubbed, "The Last Perspiration of Crist."

Fangate also dropped in on Late Show With David Letterman on CBS. Mentioning the ban on the fan in the debate, Letterman dedicated his Top 10 list to lesser known gubernatorial debate rules.

"We have some even more obscure than the fan rule," Letterman said.

They included: 9) In lieu of rebuttal, candidates may perform guitar solos; 6) Shirts must remain on for weigh-in; 4) Maximum three time outs for self-tanning application; 2) No slapping, no tickling; 1) Last candidate to take hands off podium wins.

Crisafulli's picks

Incoming House Speaker Steve Crisafulli, R-Merritt Island, has made his picks for the top leadership positions.

Rep. Matt Hudson, R-Naples, will serve as speaker pro tempore. Rep. Dana Young, R-Tampa, will be House majority leader. Rep. Ritch Workman, R-Melbourne, will be the Rules and Calendar chairman. Rep. Richard Corcoran, R-Trinity, will oversee the budget committee. (All are expected to win re-election in November, but stranger things have happened.)

Alex Leary, Michael Van Sickler and Kathleen McGrory contributed to this week's Buzz.

Emphasis On Early Voting As Quinn, Rauner Run Neck And Neck

By Lynn Sweet

[Chicago Sun-Times](#), October 18, 2014

WASHINGTON — President Barack Obama, Vice President Joe **Biden** and former President Bill Clinton all hit the Chicago area in the coming days to turn out the Democratic base vote for Gov. Pat Quinn, as early voting starts Monday in Illinois.

While there are many national stories about Obama being a drag on candidates, that's not the case in adopted homestate Illinois. Just in October, Obama will have been in Chicago twice; first lady Michelle once; **Biden** once, and, coming up Oct. 26, Dr. Jill **Biden** headlines a Democratic fundraiser in Chicago.

The White House would dispatch Bo and Sunny, the popular Obama Portuguese Water dogs, to Illinois if they could help.

Election Day, Nov. 4, is the last but by far not the only chance to vote, with enormous emphasis by Illinois Democrats and Republicans on voting by mail and the early vote, which runs through Nov. 2.

The campaigns of Quinn and GOP nominee Bruce Rauner are investing heavily in data analytics to microtarget likely voters — most specifically folks who usually sit out midterms — to inform field organizers where to send traditional grass-roots door knockers, phone calls and direct-mail pieces.

These efforts also will boost down-ticket candidates and could be crucial in some highly contested Illinois House battles, especially in the north suburban 10th congressional district.

Here are nine things to know about early voting in Illinois:

* The most important element of partisan get-out-the-vote drives, aka GOTV, is to make sure you snare your voter and not unwittingly give a boost to your rival.

After all, this is an election, not a civics class.

* Quinn needs a massive African-American turnout to beat Rauner (a poll released Friday shows a statistical dead heat), and that's why the Obama rally on Sunday night will be at the 6,000-seat Chicago State University Jones Convocation Center, 9501 S. King Drive. Obama also headlines a \$10,000-a-person fundraiser dinner Monday in Chicago for the Democratic National Committee.

* Bill Clinton hits Chicago on Tuesday to bolster Quinn. Clinton, the "Explainer-in-Chief," is delivering a speech at Wheatland Tube, 4435 S. Western, where will make the case that Quinn has improved the Illinois economy and that unemployment has dropped on his watch. Hundreds of labor and business leaders have been invited to the event. At the 2012 Democratic convention, Clinton made the case for Obama in clearer, simpler terms than any other speaker, including the president.

* **Biden** is leading an early vote rally Wednesday for Quinn, Sen. Dick Durbin, D-Ill., and Rep. Brad Schneider, D-Ill., at the Sullivan Community Center, 635 N. Aspen, in Vernon Hills — in the 10th district, where Schneider is in a tight race with former Rep. Bob Dold, R-Ill.

* In Illinois, Democrats are running a coordinated GOTV drive led by Durbin, Quinn and Democratic Party of Illinois Chairman Michael Madigan, speaker of the Illinois House. The Republican Illinois GOTV operation is led and heavily bankrolled by the Rauner campaign.

* Meanwhile next week, Rauner will stump with popular mainstream Illinois Republicans — Sen. Mark Kirk, R-Ill., Comptroller Judy Baar Topinka and Rep. Peter Roskam, R-Ill.

* Who Rauner won't be with next week: Republican 2016 presidential contenders Sen. Ted Cruz, R-Texas, in Chicago on Wednesday and Sen. Rand Paul, R-Ky., in the city on Monday. Even though Paul is on the cover of Time this week, appearing anywhere with the tea party-aligned Cruz or Paul, with his eclectic views, could hurt Rauner with the independent and Democratic swing voters he seeks.

* Democrats are also getting a heavy turnout assist from Democratic-allied unions bankrolling a drive to approve a ballot question about raising the minimum wage in Illinois. That's a turnout tool. The "Raise Illinois" Coalition plans to knock on 300,000 doors emphasizing early voting starting on Saturday.

* Why the emphasis on early voting? Campaigns go to a lot of trouble to identify their likely voters, and they want to bank them early in order to not be at the mercy of variables, such as weather. Also, campaign workers keep track of early voters, so once the ballot is cast, they don't have to waste any more effort on that person.

Schneider, Dold Trade Jabs On Medicare

By Gregory Trotter

[Chicago Tribune](#), October 18, 2014

A debate Saturday between the rivals in the north suburban 10th Congressional District — Rep. Brad Schneider, the first-term Democrat, and GOP challenger Bob Dold — grew tense on the topic of Medicare.

Dold assailed Schneider as a partisan leader who's done little good for 10th District voters.

"You said you wouldn't cut a single penny from Medicare. You have gutted the program by over \$700 billion," Dold said to Schneider. "After you've misled the voters this many times, how can they expect to trust anything that you say?"

What followed was chippy back-and-forth over the intersection of the Affordable Care Act, Medicare and past budgets proposed by Rep. Paul Ryan, R-Wis., that Dold supported when he was in Congress.

In the exchange, both politicians slung partisan Medicare talking points that have been largely debunked by fact-checking organizations in recent years.

The debate was sponsored by the League of Women Voters of Illinois and ABC 7 and will be televised on that channel at 1 p.m. Sunday.

For most of the debate, the candidates stuck to their campaign messaging. Dold stressed his willingness to break from party lines and represent the district in a bipartisan fashion; Schneider said Dold's past record was dependably right-wing.

"Only one of us has voted to cut Medicare and that's you," Schneider said. "You voted for a Ryan plan, and you voted for it twice, and the Ryan plan ends the Medicare guarantee."

In his rebuttal, Dold pointed out that the claim – "Republicans voted to end Medicare"; – was PolitiFact's "Lie of the Year" in 2011. PolitiFact is a nonpartisan fact-checking website associated with the Tampa Bay Times.

"What's interesting is he's running a campaign and he's trying to spout off things because he has no record to run on, and therefore wants to poke holes at me," Dold said.

Dold reiterate the claim that Schneider, by voting in support of the Affordable Care Act, voted to cut \$700 billion from Medicare.

That claim has also been repeatedly targeted by fact-checking groups that have made the distinction that \$716 billion will be reduced in future Medicare spending over a period of 10 years – a reduction of the spending growth rate, not a cut in current spending, according to FactCheck.org, a website run by the Annenberg Public Policy Center of the University of Pennsylvania.

Schneider unseated former Rep. Dold in 2012, winning by slightly more than one percentage point. This rematch has been closely watched and is considered a tossup by many observers.

Vice President Joe **Biden** is coming to the Chicago area Wednesday for a political rally in Vernon Hills in support of Schneider, U.S. Sen. Dick Durbin and Paul Vallas, the Democratic candidate for Illinois lieutenant governor.

Dold, Schneider Debate 10th District Issues

By Gregory Trotter

[Chicago Tribune](#), October 18, 2014

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That claim has also been repeatedly targeted by fact-checking groups that have made the distinction that \$716 billion will be reduced in future Medicare spending over a period of 10 years — a reduction of the spending growth rate, not a cut in current spending, according to FactCheck.org, a website run by the Annenberg Public Policy Center of the University of Pennsylvania.

Schneider unseated then-Rep. Dold in 2012, winning by slightly more than 1 percentage point. This rematch has been closely watched and is considered a tossup by many observers.

Vice President Joe **Biden** is coming to the Chicago area Wednesday for a political rally in Vernon Hills in support of Schneider, Sen. Dick Durbin and Paul Vallas, the Democratic candidate for Illinois lieutenant governor.

Bill Clinton, In Return Visit, Praises Worcester

By Brad Petrishan

[Worcester \(MA\) Telegram & Gazette](#), October 18, 2014

WORCESTER — Once again effusive in his praise for the city he’s visited often, former President Bill Clinton on Thursday joined high-level state Democrats in painting this year’s gubernatorial race as one pitting a principled, compassionate progressive against a prop for the Republican elite.

“You’ve got a model most of this country and most of the world would die to have,” the 42nd president said of Massachusetts. “Don’t mess it up.”

As a crowd of more than 800 listened with rapt attention in Clark University’s Atwood Hall, Mr. Clinton delivered the case for Martha M. Coakley in an often conversational tone, remarking it was more appropriate for a city he admires than “some whoop-dee-doo speech.”

“I love this place,” he said, adding that while he would have gone anywhere Ms. Coakley asked, he specifically requested the city that supported him with “20,000 signs” during a 1998 visit in which Republicans were calling for his ouster.

The president’s sentiment notwithstanding, campaign contributions suggest Ms. Coakley will likely hope Mr. Clinton’s visit will help her in the right-leaning towns surrounding heavily Democratic Worcester. An analysis of state Office of Campaign and Political Finance records shows she was outraised nearly 5-to-1 by Republican opponent Charles D. Baker Jr. in Worcester County.

Between September 2013, when both candidates announced their run, and Sept. 30 of this year, Ms. Coakley raised \$67,362 in Worcester County, records show, while Mr. Baker raised \$326,525.

While Worcester County accounted for 8.3 percent of Mr. Baker’s \$3.94 million state haul, it represented just 2.2 percent of Ms. Coakley’s overall \$3.1 million tally.

“I said so in the beginning, this campaign is about ideas, not money,” Ms. Coakley said Tuesday when asked about her struggles to fundraise in the county. “I think we will have sufficient funds to compete.”

Mr. Clinton cast aspersions Thursday on super PAC money supporting Mr. Baker and denigrating Ms. Coakley during the election, particularly one ad that excoriated Ms. Coakley in her role as attorney general for defending a state agency that was failing children.

"Clearly a lie," Mr. Clinton said of the ad, criticizing Mr. Baker, who did not create it, for not calling on those who did to pull it from the air.

"(He) figured out more people would watch their televisions than would hear her press conference (refuting it)," Mr. Clinton said, repeatedly characterizing Mr. Baker and Republicans as out-of-touch affluent people who lack empathy for the disadvantaged.

"Do you really think they care about your kids or your families?" Mr. Clinton asked of the out-of-state money poured into super PAC ads. "They will be gone, and you will be left with your decisions and its consequences, for good or ill."

According to the state OCPF, super PACs have spent more than \$6 million supporting Mr. Baker or opposing Ms. Coakley, while \$3.7 million has been spent opposing Mr. Baker.

Simply put, Mr. Clinton said, Republicans are worried more about keeping their money than helping others, something he said is particularly evident when examining Mr. Baker's stances.

Mr. Clinton was effusive in his support for Ms. Coakley's platform of universal pre-kindergarten education, saying there is "no better investment for the future of Massachusetts" than making sure the 17,000 children on the waiting list for such education find placements.

"Her opponent says it's not that big of a deal," Mr. Clinton said, similarly criticizing Mr. Baker for his "blasé" reaction to the Hobby Lobby decision by the Supreme Court that struck down a federal mandate for employers to provide contraceptives to women.

Mr. Clinton also nicked Mr. Baker's opposition to the ballot question that would entitle employees to earn and use sick time as well as to raising the minimum wage.

In both instances, Mr. Clinton said, arguments that jobs would be lost and the economy would suffer are false.

"I've never been involved in a raising of minimum wage that wasn't beneficial to the economy," Mr. Clinton said, noting that Connecticut approved sick time a few years ago and has added jobs.

In addition to criticizing Republicans and Mr. Baker, Mr. Clinton praised what he sees as Ms. Coakley's personal strengths.

"You know she's going to do what she says she's going to do," Mr. Clinton said, lauding her efforts as attorney general protecting consumers, fighting cybercrime, taking on greedy insurance companies and recovering money from Medicare fraud.

Mr. Clinton also said that Ms. Coakley has the best record of any attorney general in the country when it came to helping people keep their homes following the 2008 economic crash. He said if it wasn't for her, 30,000 people in the state would have faced foreclosure.

"Quite simply, she's got a better record than her opponent," Mr. Clinton said. Repeating a refrain by all the speakers Thursday, he urged voters to get their friends motivated to go out and vote.

"I don't care what the polls say, she can win this race handily if you want it bad enough," Mr. Clinton said.

In addition to speaking on her behalf Thursday, Mr. Clinton also helped raise money for Ms. Coakley, as a spokeswoman confirmed a fundraiser with the former president before his speech raised about \$200,000.

Mr. Clinton was not the only big-time politician stumping in the governor's race Thursday, as organizers from Mr. Baker's campaign said a fundraiser with former governor Mitt Romney in Boston was expected to raise \$600,000 Thursday evening for Mr. Baker's ticket and the state party.

"Charlie hopes President Clinton enjoys his time here in Massachusetts but believes the people of Massachusetts should be the focus of this race, not D.C. power players," Tim Buckley, Mr. Baker's head spokesman, wrote in an email Thursday. "That's why he is so proud to have the support of prominent Democrats, independents and Republicans from where it really counts."

As Mr. Buckley said, Mr. Baker has secured the support of multiple Democrats statewide, including former Worcester City Manager Michael V. O'Brien.

He has also out-raised Ms. Coakley in left-leaning cities, including Lawrence, Lynn and Gloucester — cities he lost in his failed 2010 gubernatorial bid.

"Charlie and Karyn have raised more funds from more communities in Massachusetts than their opponents," Jim Conroy, Mr. Baker's campaign manager, wrote in a release Thursday night. "Charlie leads the race in low-dollar contributions."

Mr. Baker has not appeared publicly with many national Republican figures, while Ms. Coakley has enjoyed support from many Democratic mainstays.

"Hillary's coming up here in a few days, and you'll like that better," Mr. Clinton joked Thursday. In addition to the Clintons, first lady Michelle Obama campaigned with Ms. Coakley earlier this month, while Vice President Joseph **Biden** is set to come help her fundraise later this month.

Ms. Coakley was also talked up at Thursday's event by Gov. Deval Patrick, U.S. Rep. James P. McGovern and U.S. Sen. Edward J. Markey.

"It's going to have to happen out here in Worcester County," Mr. Markey said. "It always is won or lost in Worcester County."

If that's the case, the fundraising gap between the two could signal an uphill battle. In the more than 60 cities and towns in Worcester county, Ms. Coakley raised more than Mr. Baker in only five small towns.

"Does it present a disadvantage to her? Yes," said Michael P. Angelini, chairman of the law firm Bowditch & Dewey. "Unfortunately we live in a time when there's a lot of big money around, and money talks."

But the influential city Democrat said at the end of the day, everybody only has one vote. He said though it will be a struggle for Ms. Coakley in Worcester County, she can do well if she convinces the Democratic base to come support her principles.

"Martha Coakley has very strong beliefs. She may not express them with all the gusto that a loudmouth might, but that doesn't mean she's any less committed to them," he said.

Paul Watanabe, associate professor of political science at UMass-Boston, said he thinks Ms. Coakley has built momentum heading into Mr. Clinton's visit.

"She has really come out feisty in response to the ad about her advocacy of children," Mr. Watanabe said, adding that he isn't surprised at the funding gap she faces.

"I think the gap reflects a number of things, but it clearly reflects the fact that Charlie Baker as a Republican candidate is one like many predecessors before him of the Bill Weld and Paul Cellucci mold," he said. "A Republican with a chance can raise a lot of money."

Mr. Watanabe said though Mr. Clinton's visit could sway some voters, it isn't likely to make or break her showing in the county. What will be most important statewide, he said, is how Mr. Baker does with unenrolled voters.

“His once-big lead among unenrolled voters has shrunk considerably,” he said, something that could spell “disaster” on Election Day.

Though some have painted the visits of the Clintons and others as signs of a fledgling campaign, Mr. Watanabe said he doesn’t see it that way.

“This is not CPR that’s being provided here,” he said. “It’s an important figure in the Democratic party embracing Martha Coakley and her candidacy.”

What was clear Thursday, as Mr. Clinton posed for “selfie” photos with a few lucky college students as secret service tried unsuccessfully to shoo him into a waiting SUV, was that the former president and Worcester embrace each other strongly.

Whether that embrace extends to Ms. Coakley is a question Worcester County voters will answer Nov. 4.

Nunn, Biden Volunteer At Hands On Atlanta Day

By Aaron Gould Sheinin

[Atlanta Journal-Constitution](#), October 18, 2014

Democratic U.S. Senate hopeful Michelle Nunn returned to her volunteer roots on Saturday as she and Jill **Biden** volunteered at the 25th Hands on Atlanta Day service project.

Nunn, who founded the Hands on Atlanta volunteer organization, was joined by **Biden**, wife of Vice President Joe **Biden**, on a cloudless day in downtown Atlanta. Together the pair helped spread mulch and beautify a park on Boulevard after a rally at Fort Street United Methodist Church, while other volunteer teams spread out across the neighborhood.

While in Atlanta **Biden** will help raise money for Nunn’s campaign against Republican David Perdue, but Saturday’s event was decidedly non-partisan. The words “Perdue,” “Senate,” “Democrat” and “Republican” were never uttered.

Jill Biden Volunteers With Georgia Senate Candidate

By Julian Hattem

[The Hill](#), October 18, 2014

Second lady Jill **Biden** joined Democratic Senate hopeful Michelle Nunn and hundreds of volunteers in Atlanta on Saturday.

Biden and Nunn — who is challenging Republican David Perdue to replace retiring Sen. Saxby Chambliss (R-Ga.) in the upper chamber — worked on cleaning up a park in downtown Atlanta during an annual service day created by an organization Nunn founded 25 years ago, The Atlanta Journal-Constitution reported.

“We have jobs, we have families,” **Biden** told the newspaper. “We have other obligations. The reason Michelle Nunn and a group of friends founded Hands on Atlanta Day 25 years ago is because we all know the value of community service.”

Biden added that Nunn is “someone who is making a difference in Georgia.”

Biden’s trip to the state for a slew of fundraisers and campaign events comes as national political analysts sense growing momentum for Nunn. In recent polling, Nunn’s campaign has closed the gap with Perdue and the two are currently running neck-and-neck, offering Democrats a rare opportunity to pick up a seat currently held by a Republican.

Vice President Joe **Biden**’s wife attended three fundraisers in the day she was in town, in addition to the service project.

Talking to the Journal-Constitution, Nunn said that she formed the service organization Hands on Atlanta two and a half decades ago because “people will always answer the call to service.”

“There’s nothing we can’t do, no wrong we can’t right, when we work together,” she said.

Thousands Volunteer For Hands On Atlanta Day

[WXIA-TV Atlanta](#), October 18, 2014

ATLANTA, Ga. – Saturday morning featured community service with a scoop of politics.

At the 25th annual Hands On Atlanta Day there were a couple guests helping to cleanup two urban parks in the Old Fourth Ward.

Hands on Atlanta Day was created 25 years ago by a group that included none other than Senate candidate Michelle Nunn. It was started as a way for thousands of volunteers to give back to their community. But Saturday, it served as a campaign event for Nunn who had a little help from the Second Lady, Dr. Jill **Biden**.

“She is someone who has devoted her life to public service and that’s why I’m so excited to be with her today,” **Biden** said during the event.

Dr. **Biden** helped out by scooping mulch, for about five or six minutes before she moved on.

Nunn, to her credit, stayed around for awhile. Though she wouldn’t take questions, instead saying Saturday was about service, not politics.

“We’ve done a lot of projects over the years to clean up the community, different neighborhoods,” said volunteer Terri Theisen, a past board member of Hands on Atlanta.

The volunteers were cleaning up two urban parks on Boulevard in the Old Fourth Ward. That included pulling weeds, raking leaves and painting railings.

“We have to be responsible. We have to take responsibility for our surroundings, so that’s what I’m doing,” said volunteer Ali Carter.

This year, Hands on Atlanta expects to provide more than 125,000 hours of community service.

Obama Holds Saturday Night Meeting On Ebola

By Gregory Korte

[USA Today](#), October 18, 2014

WASHINGTON – President Obama held a rare Saturday night meeting with top advisers at the White House, convening national security staffers and public health officials to discuss the threat of Ebola.

The White House provided only a brief summary of the 75-minute meeting, saying White House advisers updated him on the “contact tracing” process used to identify and monitor people who may have come into contact with the Dallas health care workers who contracted Ebola.

Ron Klain, the newly announced White House Ebola “czar,” was spotted entering the White House at about 5:30 p.m., but did not attend the meeting because he hasn’t officially started, White House Communications Director Jennifer Palmieri said. He is still completing paperwork and hopes to start in the next week, she said.

Klain – whose official title will be “Ebola response coordinator” – did meet separately Saturday with White House Chief of Staff Denis McDonough “to start to get up to speed,” Palmieri said.

Those attending the Saturday night meeting included Vice President Joe **Biden**, the secretaries of Defense, Health and Human Services and Homeland Security, and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Director Tom Frieden.

The meeting, which wasn't announced in advance, followed an afternoon of golf for the president at Fort Belvoir in Virginia. It's at least the third such meeting in four days with top administration officials devoted entirely to Ebola.

Obama departs Sunday for two days of political events, campaigning for Democratic candidates for governor in Maryland and Illinois Sunday. He will headline a Democratic National Committee event in Chicago Monday before returning to Washington.

In his weekly radio address Saturday morning, Obama urged Americans to educate themselves about the science behind how Ebola is – and isn't – spread.

"This is a serious disease, but we can't give in to hysteria or fear-because that only makes it harder to get people the accurate information they need," Obama said.

"We're a nation of more than 300 million people. To date, we've seen three cases of Ebola diagnosed here," he continued. "Now, even one infection is too many. At the same time, we have to keep this in perspective. As our public health experts point out, every year thousands of Americans die from the flu."

He also defended his decision not to institute a travel or visa ban to from the three African nations hardest hit by the epidemic, saying, "we can't just cut ourselves off from West Africa." Instituting a ban would make it harder to get aid to the region, he said, and cause people coming to the United States to lie about their travel histories.

Officials Brief Obama On Ebola Response

By Rachel Huggins

[The Hill](#), October 19, 2014

President Obama on Saturday evening met with members of his national security and public health teams for an update on the administration's response to the Ebola outbreak.

The president's advisers briefed him on the contact tracing process to identify and monitor individuals who may have come in contact with the two Dallas patients who've contracted the virus, according to a White House readout of the meeting.

Obama's team also reviewed measures to ensure that Dallas has resources to diagnose any additional cases safely and effectively.

Participants included Vice President Joe **Biden**, Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel, Health and Human Services Secretary Sylvia Burwell, White House Chief of Staff Denis McDonough, Director of the Office of Management and Budget Shaun Donovan, National Security Advisor Susan Rice, Counselor to the President Neil Eggleston, Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Thomas Frieden, Deputy National Security Advisor Antony Blinken, Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism Lisa Monaco among others.

President Obama: Americans Shouldn't 'Give In To Hysteria' On Ebola

By Bruce Alpert

[New Orleans Times-Picayune](#), October 18, 2014

WASHINGTON, DC – President Barack Obama Saturday urged Americans not to "give in to hysteria," and realize that Ebola, while a serious disease, isn't an outbreak or epidemic in the United States.

"We're a nation of more than 300 million people," the president said in his weekly radio address. "To date, we've seen three cases of Ebola diagnosed here – the man who contracted the disease in Liberia, came here and sadly died; the two courageous nurses who were infected while they were treating him.

Our thoughts and our prayers are with them, and we're doing everything we can to give them the best care possible. Now, even one infection is too many. At the same time, we have to keep this in perspective. As our public health experts point out, every year thousands of Americans die from the flu."

Moreover, the president said, "Ebola is actually a difficult disease to catch."

"It's not transmitted through the air like the flu," Obama said. "You cannot get it from just riding on a plane or a bus. The only way that a person can contract the disease is by coming into direct contact with the bodily fluids of somebody who is already showing symptoms. I've met and hugged some of the doctors and nurses who've treated Ebola patients. I've met with an Ebola patient who recovered, right in the Oval Office. And I'm fine."

"Third, we know how to fight this disease. We know the protocols. And we know that when they're followed, they work. So far, five Americans who got infected with Ebola in West Africa have been brought back to the United States-and all five have been treated safely, without infecting healthcare workers."

The president again rejected calls to block air travel from the three Western African nations at the epicenter of the disease, with 4,500 deaths so far. Among those advocating a travel ban – at least for non U.S. passport holders, are Gov. Bobby Jindal, Sen. David Vitter, R-La., Rep. Bill Cassidy, R-Baton Rouge, and Steve Scalise, R-Jefferson and Rep. John Fleming, R-Minden.

"We can't just cut ourselves off from West Africa, where this disease is raging," Obama said. "Our medical experts tell us that the best way to stop this disease is to stop it at its source-before it spreads even wider and becomes even more difficult to contain. Trying to seal off an entire region of the world-if that were even possible – could actually make the situation worse. It would make it harder to move health workers and supplies back and forth. Experience shows that it could also cause people in the affected region to change their travel, to evade screening, and make the disease even harder to track."

The president said that combating Ebola "will take time."

"Before this is over, we may see more isolated cases here in America," Obama said. "But we know how to wage this fight. And if we take the steps that are necessary, if we're guided by the science-the facts, not fear-then I am absolutely confident that we can prevent a serious outbreak here in the United States, and we can continue to lead the world in this urgent effort."

Cassidy, a physician who is running for the U.S. Senate, has sharply criticized Obama's approach, including his naming Friday of Ron Klain, an attorney and former chief of staff to Vice President Joe **Biden** and former Vice President Al Gore, to coordinate the administration's response. Cassidy said that the coordinator should have been someone with medical experience.

"By appointing a Democrat political operative as the 'Ebola czar,' it is clear that the President sees Ebola as a political crisis and not a health crisis," Cassidy said.

Josh Earnest, the president's spokesman, said Klain has extensive management experience, and proven ability to coordinate diverse agencies, public and private, to deal with complex problems.

Sen. Mary Landrieu, D-La., said Thursday that "the people of Louisiana and the United States want us to be united when facing challenges – whether it is a disaster or a disease."

"We need smart, swift and decisive action by the federal government to contain Ebola," Landrieu said. "I urge the Administration to expand the current screenings from five to all 20 airports in the United States where tourists, international workers and businesses leaders from West Africa arrive. In addition, it is important to remember in face of constant calls for budget cuts, that the investments we make today in our health care system, NIH research and emergency response training at our hospitals can help prevent and quickly contain diseases like Ebola."

Ebola ‘Czar’ Knows Washington, But Not Medicine

By Josh Lederman

[Associated Press](#), October 19, 2014

WASHINGTON — If there’s one thing the “Ebola czar” knows, it’s government.

Ron Klain, President Barack Obama’s new point man on Ebola, has no medical or public health background. But he does have a wealth of experience managing unruly federal bureaucracies in times of crisis. The White House says that makes him the perfect candidate to shepherd the government’s response to a deadly, growing outbreak.

Yet after demanding that Obama appoint a “czar,” some Republicans are balking at the president’s choice of a Washington insider and political operative to handle a public health emergency that has many Americans in fear.

And though Klain has tackled the national financial crisis and served as chief of staff to two vice presidents — he’s even been portrayed by Kevin Spacey in an HBO film — his latest gig may prove his toughest challenge.

“He’s there to get the job done, not win the Nobel Prize in medicine,” said Bruce Reed, another former chief of staff to Vice President Joe **Biden**. Reed worked with Klain in both the Obama and Clinton administrations.

Under immense pressure to step up his response, Obama turned to Klain on Friday. He’s being asked to synchronize an alphabet blizzard of federal agencies: the CDC, NIH, HHS, DHS, FDA and DOD, to name a few. All are working in one fashion or another to stem Ebola in the U.S. and in West Africa, but breakdowns in the system that led to two health workers contracting Ebola in Dallas have raised concerns that the government isn’t doing enough.

No, his title isn’t “czar.” He’s the government’s Ebola response coordinator.

Klain was Obama’s first choice for the job, said White House spokesman Josh Earnest. He’s expected to stay on the job just five or six months and will report to Obama’s homeland security adviser, Lisa Monaco, and his national security adviser, Susan Rice. Those two advisers have been at the forefront of the Ebola operation at the White House, but with other threats competing for their attention, Earnest said Obama saw a need to bring on outside help to focus exclusively on Ebola.

An attorney and longtime Democratic operative, Klain served as Vice President Al Gore’s chief of staff and was a key figure during the 2000 Florida presidential election recount, leading to his portrayal by Spacey in the HBO film “Recount.” He previously served under Attorney General Janet Reno in the Clinton administration and later as **Biden**’s chief of staff.

During Obama’s first term, Klain helped spearhead the roughly \$800 billion stimulus package in 2009 in response to the financial crisis — a massive, cross-government project that Klain’s supporters say offers parallels to the challenge he is now undertaking with Ebola. Out of government since 2011, Klain is currently president of the holding company of former AOL chairman Steve Case and general counsel for a Washington-based technology venture capital firm.

Yet Republicans criticized Obama’s selection, calling Klain’s experience insufficient and wondering why the president didn’t choose someone with a background in, say, infectious disease control. With the midterm elections closing in, GOP lawmakers argued that picking a Democratic operative was tone-deaf to the public’s growing concerns about Ebola and declining confidence in the government’s competence.

“Leave it to President Obama to put a liberal political activist in charge of the administration’s Ebola response,” said Rep. John Fleming, R-La., himself a physician.

Former colleagues describe Klain as a born problem-solver with little patience for disorganization, waste or tardiness. When he oversaw the stimulus, his associates say, he was known for forcing agencies that didn't get along to cooperate.

"These situations can be pretty dark and seem extremely hopeless," said Jared Bernstein, **Biden's** former chief economist. "Ron's ability to see the best path to success keeps him and those around him focused in a pretty positive way."

Associated Press writer Jim Kuhnhenn contributed to this report.

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Loop Guidance For New Ebola Czar Ron Klain

By Al Kamen

[Washington Post](#), October 18, 2014

First of all, congratulations on your new czarship. It's not White House counsel or chief of staff, but it's very important. (Besides, McDonough can't be there forever, right?)

There will be people who'll say you don't have any background in matters medical, but ignore them. You are eminently qualified. You clerked for Byron White, for crying out loud, and anyone who could handle Byron. . . And being chief of staff to both Al Gore and then Joe **Biden** isn't exactly a walk in the park.

Besides, the job apparently is to pull things together in the bureaucracy, to coordinate things and deal with Congress and the press. You're smart, savvy and you know this town and how it works better than most anyone. So maybe you're not an Everett Koop or Atul Gawande, but you'll be fine.

But always remember, you're dealing with irrational people demanding action, no matter how useless and even absurd it might be.

Congress doesn't want explanations and, as nature abhors a vacuum, most members abhor reason. Think of all the critics of "czars" — we recall John McCain's great tweet a while back that Obama had more czars than the Romanoff dynasty.

Obama has more czars than the Romanovs — who ruled Russia for 3 centuries. Romanovs 18, cyberczar makes 20.— John McCain (@SenJohnMcCain) May 30, 2009

(It was a funny tweet though.)

And now McCain has called for one as did other GOP members of Congress.

They want you to DO something. Anything. Counterproductive or stupid are not acceptable excuses. There have already been two confirmed cases of Ebola in this country.

So here's what you do.

First, you announce that "effective immediately," you are, as several members of Congress have demanded, banning all (repeat "all" for emphasis) non-stop flights from the West African countries most affected — Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia.

Furthermore, you say, you are, under the powers granted to you, immediately (repeat for emphasis) ordering the United States Air Force to shoot down any passenger planes violating the ban.

Since there are, in fact, no non-stop flights from those countries, this should be no problem. You might think this is crazy, because other countries may follow suit, thereby crippling the economies in West Africa just when they need all the resources they can muster to battle Ebola. (You would be right, but, as

Margaret Thatcher once famously told Bush I on the eve of the first Persian Gulf war in 1990: “This is no time to go wobbly, George.”)

Sure, most people come to this country after boarding connecting flights in Paris, Brussels or London. Some 36,000 a day come from the most affected countries, with 25 percent headed to the United States. Admit that’s a problem and say you’re working on it “in consultation with our allies.” (A reassuring way to say you’re having a conference call.)

Finally, the trickiest move of all – though the White House will be forever indebted to you. You are, with great sadness, taking Fox News off the air lest viewers come across anchor Shepherd Smith’s long, articulate and impassioned segment Wednesday condemning “hysterical” and “irresponsible” media coverage and explaining what’s actually happening with Ebola using real, true facts to insist “there is no Ebola spreading in America,” so everyone should get a goddamn grip, calm down and get a flu shot.

Finally, you should emphasize (use somber, remorseful tones here) your “profound and abiding” respect for the First Amendment and explain that this a temporary measure, albeit necessary because we’re dealing with the end of civilization here.

Good luck.

Hillary To Hit Boston On Friday To Stump For Coakley

By Matt Stout

[Boston Herald](#), October 19, 2014

Former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton is set to sweep into Boston next Friday to give a star-powered bump to Democratic gubernatorial nominee Martha Coakley, who’s counting on a long list of high-profile surrogates to help energize voters.

Clinton, long viewed as a potential 2016 White House contender, will appear at an afternoon rally with Coakley at the Park Plaza Hotel in downtown Boston, a campaign aide said — a little more than a week after her husband, former President Bill Clinton, stumped for Coakley in Worcester.

It adds to a growing list of power players who have already turned out for the attorney general in her neck-and-neck race with Republican nominee Charlie Baker.

First lady Michelle Obama appeared with her earlier this month in Dorchester, as did Vice President Joe **Biden**, who is set to return to headline a fundraiser for Coakley on Oct. 29. Bill Clinton addressed 800 supporters at Clark University yesterday before skipping off to Manchester, N.H., where he delivered a similar stump speech to Democrats there.

Rumblings of a Hillary Clinton visit have floated around the Coakley campaign for weeks after the Herald reported earlier this month that Democrats were working to lure the former first lady to the Hub to help pump some much-needed cash into Coakley’s campaign.

A fundraiser with Bill Clinton helped pull in \$200,000, Coakley’s campaign said, but even after taking nearly \$300,000 in public financing this month, she and running mate Steve Kerrigan still trail Baker by nearly \$1.2 million in cash on hand as of midmonth.

More details on Hillary Clinton’s visit weren’t available last night, Coakley’s campaign said.

With policy plans trotted out and a series debates separating the candidates from the Nov. 4 vote, appearances by the Clintons and others are targeted at stirring momentum and energy in a base that traditionally skips the voting booths when a president isn’t on the ballot.

“Don’t forget this: This matters,” Bill Clinton implored of supporters in Worcester. “Every one of you will speak in these next 19 days to a hundred people who might not vote. Every one of you. And if they all do vote, we’ll all be celebrating on Election Day.”

Biden's Son Won't Have Conn. Law License Reviewed After Positive Cocaine Test

By Stephen Braun

[New London \(CT\) Day](#), October 18, 2014

Washington – Hunter **Biden**, the youngest son of Vice President Joe **Biden**, faces no automatic review of his law license in Connecticut following his discharge from the U.S. Navy Reserve after testing positive for cocaine use, Connecticut legal authorities said Friday.

Hunter **Biden** works in Washington as a private equity executive and board director of an international energy firm, but he is admitted to practice law in Connecticut, where attorneys' privileges can be examined under a disciplinary review system. Legal clients, state lawyers, judges and any citizen can file grievances, but as of Friday, none had been filed, authorities said.

Lawyers in Connecticut face automatic review of their bar admission only when they have been convicted of a crime, said Michael P. Bowler, Connecticut's Statewide Bar Counselor, who heads a team of lawyers that investigate attorney grievances. Criminal convictions have to be reviewed by a statewide grievance committee, as do other complaints, which can range from drug and alcohol abuse to inadequate legal representation.

"At this point, I'm not aware that Mr. **Biden** has been arrested for anything, and certainly not convicted," Bowler said. The Navy's brief confirmation of **Biden's** discharge did not cite any arrest or charges. Two people familiar with the matter told The Associated Press he was kicked out after testing positive for cocaine, confirming what was first reported by The Wall Street Journal.

Bowler added that **Biden** had told state authorities in 2007 that he was also admitted to the bar in Washington, D.C. Current District of Columbia bar records do not show **Biden** as member.

The Navy said Thursday that **Biden** was discharged in February from a part-time position as a public affairs officer in the Navy Reserve but did not provide a reason. **Biden** released a statement through his attorney saying, "I deeply regret and am embarrassed that my actions led to my administrative discharge."

Biden, 44, a former Washington lobbyist, is a managing partner at the Rosemont Seneca Partners investment firm and a director at Burisma Holdings, a Ukraine-based energy company. A Washington lobbyist for Burisma, David Leiter, did not respond to requests for comment from The Associated Press.

Mark Dubois, the president of the Connecticut Bar Association, said that state bar and ethics officials are sensitive to news accounts involving misbehavior of lawyers admitted to practice in the state, but he said, "They have to be judicious about starting the process."

Dubois, who formerly investigated and prosecuted ethical misconduct as Connecticut Disciplinary Counsel, said authorities have initiated cases in the past involving drug and alcohol abuse by attorneys, but "only when it's a fairly extensive record of abuse."

NEW YORK TIMES AND WASHINGTON POST OP-EDS

A Rate Cap For All Consumer Loans

[New York Times](#), October 19, 2014

The Obama administration has proposed much-needed improvements in federal rules that are supposed to protect service members from predatory loans that trap them in debt and, in certain circumstances, can end their military careers. The changes would repair glaring weaknesses in the rules used to carry out the Military Lending Act of 2007. But the administration and Congress should not stop

there. Millions of civilians are also exposed to ruinously priced loans. What is needed is a national consumer lending standard — and interest rate cap — to ensure fair credit in the country as a whole.

The Military Lending Act sought to protect service members from debt traps by applying a 36 percent interest cap and other consumer protections to a subset of products, including certain kinds of payday loans and vehicle title loans. However, open-ended credit, long-term installment loans and some other products fell outside those rules.

Even after the law was passed, a South Carolina lender gave a service member a \$1,615 title loan on a 13-year-old car and charged \$15,613 in interest — an annual rate of 400 percent — without violating federal law. The new proposed rules close this and other loopholes by applying the 36 percent cap to most credit products aimed at service members, with some common-sense exemptions.

Troops who are saddled with excessive debt are burdensome to the military. They have morale problems and are costlier to manage because they need counseling and other services. Debt also affects military readiness: Thousands of troops have been barred from serving abroad because the debt they carry is thought to make them security risks.

The predatory loans that are pushing service members into penury, however, are not unique to them. Earlier this year, for example, the federal Consumer Financial Protection Bureau found that hidden fees and charges on payday loans were so high that only 15 percent of borrowers could raise the money to repay the total debt on time without quickly borrowing again. Nearly two-thirds of the borrowers were forced to renew their loans — some more than 10 times — depleting their resources and digging them deeper and deeper into financial holes.

Poor and working-class people across the country are being driven into poverty and default by deceptively packaged, usuriously priced loans. The obvious solution is a national standard for consumer lending. Both the House and Senate have bills pending that would adopt the 36 percent standard for all consumer transactions, including those involving payday loans, mortgages, car loans, credit cards, overdraft loans and so on.

Predatory lenders and their surrogates in Congress may claim that a national standard is inconsistent with free enterprise. In truth, rate caps were found in all of the original 13 colonies. Moreover, 46 states and the District of Columbia set interest limits on at least some of the small loans typically offered by payday lenders.

Payday lending expanded significantly during the 1990s, when many states unwisely exempted the lenders from usury caps. Since then, many states have seen the light, but not nearly enough. Resourceful payday lenders have also managed to evade even tough state laws by setting up shop elsewhere or using the Internet. It's clearly time for a national standard.

From Jimmy Carter, A Rebuke To Egypt

[New York Times](#), October 19, 2014

Over three decades, the Carter Center in Atlanta, led by former President Jimmy Carter, has established itself as a respected advocate for human rights and democracy. It has sent observers to 97 elections in 38 countries, worked to persuade governments to respect freedoms and human rights, and supported citizens who defend those principles. But it has thrown in the towel on Egypt.

In a statement last week, the center announced that it would close its Cairo office after nearly three years and would not send experts to monitor parliamentary elections later this year. "The current environment in Egypt is not conducive to genuine democratic elections and civic participation," Mr. Carter

said as part of the statement, which warned that political campaigning in an already polarized situation “could be extremely difficult, and possibly dangerous, for critics of the regime.”

The center’s withering judgment is a damning critique of Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, a former general who overthrew President Mohamed Morsi, an Islamist allied with the Muslim Brotherhood, in 2013. It also sends two powerful messages to the Obama administration.

One is that playing down Mr. Sisi’s repressive tactics is bound to backfire and drive aggrieved Egyptians to violence and extremism, destabilizing both Egypt and the region.

The other is that absent a radical shift in Egypt’s approach, there is no way Secretary of State John Kerry can credibly certify to Congress anytime soon that the country is on a democratic path. That certification is a condition of Egypt’s receiving \$650 million worth of American tanks and fighter planes. It should be withheld until Mr. Sisi shows he is serious about putting in place “a state that respects the rights and freedoms,” which he disingenuously described in a United Nations speech in September.

Washington is obviously concerned about upsetting an important Arab ally that honors its peace treaty with Israel and permits expedited passage through the vital Suez Canal. But at some point the United States must draw a line. It would also be helpful if Israel, which prides itself on its democracy and has productive ties with Mr. Sisi, encouraged him to abandon the authoritarian course he has followed ever since he got himself elected president in a rigged vote in 2014. Mr. Sisi has cracked down on dissidents, opposition groups and journalists, including three respected professionals working for Al Jazeera. The Carter Center expressed alarm about the mass arrests of Brotherhood leaders and supporters, whom Egypt has unfairly branded as terrorists. More than 16,000 people are in jail for political reasons; more than 1,000 were killed during protests.

A so-called protest law passed in 2013 sharply limits freedoms of expression and assembly. Another law dating from the regime of Hosni Mubarak, who was ousted in 2011, is aimed at regulating nongovernmental civic groups as well as international organizations like the Carter Center. The center noted that Mr. Sisi’s government was tightening enforcement of that law while proposing a new law that would be even more restrictive. Mr. Sisi has also amended the penal code so that anyone charged with receiving money or arms from a foreign country or organization could face a life sentence.

In 2013, an Egyptian court found more than three dozen employees of foreign nonprofit groups, including 16 Americans, guilty of receiving illegal funds from abroad and operating unlicensed organizations. Most of those charged left the country and did not serve prison time, but the threat of further arrests has increased.

Nongovernmental interest groups of all kinds, including the Carter Center, obviously have cause for alarm. But so do all Egyptians who do not toe Mr. Sisi’s authoritarian line, and that cannot possibly instill confidence in the foreign investors and tourists who are vital to rebuilding Egypt’s troubled economy. America must do what it can to persuade Mr. Sisi to abandon this dangerous course.

The House’s Ethics Lesson For The Senate

[New York Times](#), October 19, 2014

The public’s low opinion of Congress has had one good effect: It has helped to insulate the Office of Congressional Ethics from members of Congress who might privately pray for the office’s demise.

The semi-independent ethics office was created six years ago, after the Jack Abramoff corruption scandal, and has since become a credible watchdog of misbehavior by House members, who dare not abolish it, much as many of them resent its oversight. The office has built such a strong reputation of nonpartisanship and professionalism in conducting discreet preliminary investigations of accusations

against House members that it stands as a powerful argument for creating a parallel office in the Senate, which has no such ethics monitor.

The chambers' differing approach to enforcing their ethics codes is no small matter in modern politics, with the rising torrent of secret and unregulated campaign money inevitably driving quid pro quo suspicions. Almost half of the complaints fielded by the House ethics office involve aspects of campaign money.

The Federal Election Commission has such a woeful enforcement record in this area that Congress's own ethics committees face a greater responsibility to guard against misbehaving lawmakers. Unfortunately, members of the Senate carry out ethics investigations in murky privacy, devoid of the sort of accounting to the public that the House ethics office is required to make.

These differences have been laid out in a new study showing that the House's own ethics committee has become much more active since the ethics office was created to vet complaints, not quietly bury them. Even without subpoena power, which it should have, the office referred about a third of its inquiries to the ethics committee for further consideration. As a result, 20 disciplinary actions were approved by the House committee in the last five years — four times the rate in pre-O.C.E. periods, according to the study by Public Citizen, an ethics watchdog group.

In contrast, the Senate ethics committee has been as lumbering and guarded as a tortoise, dismissing most complaints with just a few letters of admonition and no disciplinary actions voted against members in the last seven years. A person familiar with the procedures of the Senate committee told *The National Journal* that the vast majority of accusations received do not fall under its jurisdiction and involve complaints about the executive branch or floor speeches by lawmakers. This may be so, but why is the public told so little about complaints that might merit review?

In the House, complaints the ethics office sends along to the ethics committee must be disclosed regularly as something the public is plainly entitled to know.

The Ebola Scare

By Ross Douthat

[New York Times](#), October 19, 2014

I PROMISED myself I wouldn't do it, but I did: While flying from D.C. to Dallas last week, just after the news came out that an Ebola-infected nurse had been allowed to fly while running a fever, I went back and read the opening pages of Stephen King's "The Stand."

In King's epic, perhaps his finest, a superflu with a 99.4 percent fatality rate accidentally escapes from a desert laboratory and lays waste to civilization. King being King, supernatural developments ensue for the survivors. But the book is at its most terrifying in the unraveling with which it opens, when the only bogeyman that matters is a hacking cough that spreads and spreads and spreads.

To reread these pages now — in a time of national, well, not panic but least disquiet over the handling of Ebola inside our borders — is to be struck both by parallels and by crucial differences between the scenario King conjured and what we fear today.

The parallels lie, not surprisingly, in the realm of official incompetence. King's superflu escapes because various computerized safeguards fail; it spreads because of interagency chaos in chasing down patient zero; it compromises a C.D.C. facility whose safeguards turn out to be insufficient. The chaos swirling around the Dallas Ebola infections has followed this kind of pattern: the patient sent home undiagnosed; the unprepared hospital and the infected nurses; the C.D.C.'s weird slowness in taking

over; the confident governmental assurances giving way to blame-shifting, double talk and the appointment of a political hack as Ebola princeps ... er ... sultan ... er, czar.

But the differences are interesting as well. King's novel, infused with 1970s-era paranoia, imagines a government that blunders constantly but is also malignantly competent — brilliant enough to design a superflu capable of killing 99 percent of humanity, tyrannical enough to suppress media reports with martial law and murder, ruthless enough to swiftly spread the superflu behind the Iron Curtain to make sure our enemies go down with us.

This part of the novel's vision is of a piece with all of modern conspiracy culture, which requires a certain level of omniscience to sustain its theories about covered-up alien landings or 9/11 inside jobs.

But conspiracy culture, while always resilient, has had a tough go of it of late. From the Iraq war to Hurricane Katrina and various Obama-era debacles, the public has been steadily conditioned to fear government incompetence much more than it fears secret conspiracies against the public good. Instead of the Bilderbergers and the Trilateralists and the cigarette-smoking man, it's Mike "heckuva job" Brown and George "slam dunk" Tenet and whoever was allegedly in charge of the V.A. hospital system who haunt our collective unconscious these days. People still indulge the occasional "House of Cards"-style fantasy of all-powerful political puppetmasters, but what actually scares us is the idea of the Ebola epidemic being managed by the gang from "Veep."

I suspect that's part of why Obama-era scandals that may actually involve secret government machinations — from the N.S.A. revelations to the harassment of journalists and the politicized overreach of Lois Lerner's I.R.S. division — haven't fixed themselves in the public imagination, at least among people who don't have an explicit ideological or political interest at stake. Wisely or not, Americans have trouble imagining the White House that gave us the HealthCare.gov rollout micromanaging partisan I.R.S. chicanery, or the national security bureaucracy that couldn't see 9/11 or the Islamic State coming doing anything all that Machiavellian with a firehose's worth of online data.

Likewise with Ebola: Of course you can find wild conspiracy theories, but the idea of a successful government cover-up — secret body bags, muzzled journalists — is basically laughable. Instead, the baseline anxiety is all about bureaucratic incompetence exacerbated by insouciance, with conservatives fearing that a liberal administration won't be willing to go far enough — in terms of travel restrictions and quarantines — to effectively contain the disease's spread.

Because plausible arguments have been offered for and against a travel ban, the administration's actual response will be an interesting case study. As much as the authorities have fouled up so far, we've only had a few infections. If the White House continues to resist calls for more dramatic measures, and we manage to contain Ebola domestically, then the president and his appointees will look more competent and levelheaded than their critics — a result that's all too rare these days.

Given the track record, however, it's easy to imagine somewhat less fortunate results, and travel restrictions increasingly seem like an appropriate hedge against ongoing domestic incompetence.

But it would be welcome, and then some, to watch a competent strategy unfold that rendered that opinion obsolete.

And then, our faith in government's effectiveness partially restored, we can all get back to worrying about what's being secretly cooked up in the Nevada desert.

The Virus Of Cynicism

By Frank Bruni

[New York Times](#), October 19, 2014

WE have no clue at this point how far Ebola could spread in the United States — and no reason for panic.

But one dimension of the disease's toll is clear. It's ravaging Americans' already tenuous faith in the competence of our government and its bureaucracies.

Before President Obama's election, we had Iraq, Katrina and the meltdown of banks supposedly under Washington's watch. Since he came along to tidy things up, we've had the staggeringly messy rollout of Obamacare, the damnable negligence of the Department of Veterans Affairs and the baffling somnambulism of the Secret Service.

Now this. Although months of a raging Ebola epidemic in West Africa gave the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention sufficient warning and ample time to get ready for any cases here, it was caught flat-footed, as its director, Tom Frieden, is being forced bit by bit to acknowledge. Weeks ago he assured us: "We are stopping Ebola in its tracks in this country." Over recent days he updated that assessment, saying that "in retrospect, with 20/20 hindsight," federal officials could and should have done more at the Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital in Dallas.

President Obama made his own assurances and then corrections. He said back in mid-September that "in the unlikely event that someone with Ebola does reach our shores, we've taken new measures so that we're prepared here at home."

Well, we weren't wholly prepared, and the event was never unlikely: This country is a potent magnet for travelers, with a proudly (and rightly) open posture toward the world. People stream in all the time. And a federally funded study published in early September calculated a nearly 20 percent "probability of Ebola virus disease case importation" within three weeks. Within four, Thomas Duncan, the Liberian man who was initially (and inexplicably) turned away from the Dallas hospital, was at last admitted and treated for Ebola.

After that screw-up by hospital officials, Frieden told us that the right protocols were in place. But it now appears that Duncan wasn't immediately put in isolation; that nurses attending to him were confused about the proper use of protective garb; and that the clothing they wore may have left bits of skin exposed.

We've learned of the C.D.C.'s bizarrely permissive attitude toward the hospital workers who came in contact with Duncan or his lab samples. While they should have been on restricted movement, one took flights — after first calling the C.D.C. for a green light — from Texas to Ohio and back. Another boarded a cruise ship. By Monday, will we find out about a C.D.C.-approved game of Twister in the hospital staff room?

This is bad, not because it means that a large number of Americans are at risk of infection but because it confirms the sloppiness of the very institutions in which we place the most trust. It's spreading the virus of cynicism.

And the C.D.C.'s missteps have much different implications from the errors made by the Secret Service and by Veterans Affairs. Individual Americans don't fear that the Secret Service's lapses will endanger them personally, and many of them aren't directly affected by the wrongdoing of hospitals for veterans. But they can imagine themselves on one of those flights or in some other closed space with an infected person. They feel vulnerable.

Because the Ebola response deepens doubt about the current government, it almost certainly hurts incumbents in the midterm elections and favors change. That's unhappy news for Democrats as they fight to retain control of the Senate, and by the end of last week, they were spooked. I heard that not only in my conversations with party strategists but also in the statements of Democratic candidates themselves.

BRUCE BRALEY, locked in a tight Senate race in Iowa, publicly upbraided the Obama administration for what he characterized as a sluggish response. Al Franken, running for re-election in Minnesota, said there should at least be serious consideration of the sorts of flight restrictions that Obama has dismissed. Even Jay Carney, the president's former spokesman, mentioned such restrictions as potentially wise policy.

Rationally or not, this is one of those rare moments when Americans who typically tune out so much of what leaders say are paying rapt attention, and Obama's style of communication hasn't risen fully to the occasion. Even as he canceled campaign appearances and created a position — Ebola czar — that we were previously told wasn't necessary, he spoke with that odd dispassion of his, that maddening distance.

About the ban, he said, "I don't have a philosophical objection necessarily." About the czar, he said that it might be good to have a person "to make sure that we're crossing all the T's and dotting all the I's going forward." He's talking theory and calligraphy while Americans are focused on blood, sweat and tears.

Ebola is his presidency in a petri dish. It's an example already of his tendency to talk too loosely at the outset of things, so that his words come back to haunt him. There was the doctor you could keep under his health plan until, well, you couldn't. There was the red line for Syria that he didn't have to draw and later erased.

With Ebola, he said almost two weeks ago that "we're doing everything that we can" with an "all-hands-on-deck approach." But on Wednesday and Thursday he announced that there were additional hands to be put on deck and that we could and would do more. The shift fit his pattern: not getting worked up in the early stages, rallying in the later ones.

It's more understandable in this case than in others, because when it comes to statements about public health, the line between adequately expressed concern and a license for hysteria is thin and not easily determined. Still, he has to make Americans feel that he understands their alarm, no matter how irrational he deems it, and that they're being leveled with, not talked down to, not handled. And he has a ways to go.

"If you were his parent, you'd want to shake him," said one Democratic strategist, who questioned where Obama's passion was and whether, even this deep into his presidency, he appreciated one of the office's most vital functions: deploying language, bearing, symbols and ceremony to endow Americans with confidence in who's leading them and in how they're being led.

Right now in this country there's a crisis of confidence, and of competence, and that's the fertile ground in which the Ebola terror flowers. That's the backdrop for whatever steps Obama and Frieden take from here. With the right ones, they can go a long way toward calming people who are anxious not just about Ebola but about America. I don't even want to think about the wrong ones.

An Affair To Remember, Differently

By Maureen Dowd

[New York Times](#), October 19, 2014

WE live in a world awash in unreliable narrators.

Officials at the Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital were unreliable narrators on Ebola. The Internet is bristling with unreliable narrators who prefer their takes to the truth. The unsavory husband and wife in the thriller “Gone Girl” are such chillingly unreliable narrators that they easily beat out the undead unreliable narrator, Dracula, at the box office. And let’s not even start on Fox News.

So now comes the riveting “Rashomon” in Montauk, Showtime’s “The Affair,” with Ruth Wilson and Dominic West offering alternating he recalls-she recalls versions of the same story in each show, as they get swept up in sexual infidelity and a serious crime during a shimmering summer.

I went to Brooklyn to talk to West — the British actor who played the raffish Baltimore detective Jimmy McNulty in “The Wire” on HBO — and the show’s co-creator, Sarah Treem, as they shot scenes at a school there.

West’s character, Noah, is a novelist and teacher who lives in a Brooklyn brownstone with his wife, played by Maura Tierney, and four kids. He’s happily married but feeling insecure about the lackluster performance of his first novel. It gets worse when his wife giggles at his facial expression during lovemaking, and he’s taunted by his arrogant father-in-law, a famous fiction writer who owns the oceanfront mansion in the Hamptons where the family is spending the summer.

When West meets Wilson’s comely Alison, a diner waitress and Montauk native who is also married to someone she loves (Joshua Jackson) and also feeling uncertain and anxious, the chase is on.

But who’s chasing whom? In West’s memory, Alison is sultry and curvy, wearing sexy outfits and seducing him. In Alison’s version, she’s wan and withdrawn, still mourning the drowning death of her small son and dubious about Noah’s aggressive blandishments.

Treem, a playwright and “House of Cards” writer, created “The Affair” with Hagai Levi, with whom she also worked on HBO’s “In Treatment.”

Treem said the new show uses sex to illustrate that the characters are “trying to connect and they fail at it all the time. I think we have a lot of sex in this show, but in terms of the sex where they’re actually unified, that happens very rarely.”

Treem is a newlywed. In June, she married Jay Carson, a former campaign spokesman for Howard Dean and Hillary Clinton who is a producer on “House of Cards” and the father of Treem’s nearly 2-year-old son. Yet the brainy, alluring 34-year-old has an intriguingly jaded philosophy of romance.

“I have this belief that, in all relationships, there’s this long erotic moment that happens at the beginning of the relationship,” she said. “It’s like the pole of a tetherball court, and then everything else is just basically that damn ball going around, winding and unwinding around that one erotic moment, and you’re trying to always get back to that incredible moment of connection with somebody, and it’s gone forever.”

She said they put up a quote by the poet Robert Hass in the writers’ room, the final line of a passage where he describes the sensation of making love to a woman: “I felt a violent wonder at her presence like a thirst for salt, for my childhood river with its island willows, silly music from the pleasure boat, muddy places where we caught the little orange-silver fish called pumpkinseed. It hardly had to do with her. Longing, we say, because desire is full of endless distances.”

I tell her that Carson asked me if he should be worried, given how knowingly his wife writes about infidelity.

She laughed, replying, “I wrote the show when I was still single at 31, so at that point in your life you see a lot of infidelity. You have married men coming on to you. You see your friends already in affairs. From my perspective at that point, infidelity was all over the place. Now, being married, I would like my marriage to work. I love him, and I want to be faithful to him, and I want him to be faithful to me.” But, she adds matter-of-factly, “you probably have a 20 percent chance, maybe a 10 percent chance, of actually getting through an entire marriage with no infidelity.”

When I ask her if she thinks that men are more prone to cheat, she instantly replies: “Yes, I do.”

West agrees that the show may be “a shag-a-thon,” as he merrily put it, but its real subject is meant to be marriage.

“When you have four kids, inevitably your sex life suffers,” said West, himself a father of four. “But, for me, in my 20s and 30s, the stakes are much higher if you’re unfaithful. I feel, as you get older, the stakes get a lot lower. I don’t think infidelity would bother either me or my wife so much as if anything happened to our children, for instance. It ceases to be the primary anxiety.”

WHEN I mentioned that it was interesting how, in Noah’s remembrance, Alison has fuller breasts, West’s eyes widened in surprise.

“Does she?” he said, laughing. “Is that right? Well spotted.”

The actor said that, after playing Iago and the English serial killer Fred West, he yearned for a more heroic role.

“I was really keen to play a good guy,” he said, with a wry smile. “So this is the good guy I’m playing — a cheating husband.”

As Ebola Rages In Africa, The International Response Continues To Lag

[Washington Post](#), October 19, 2014

THE VIRUS particles that cause the Ebola and Marburg hemorrhagic fevers are shaped like filaments, straight and sometimes curled, 80 billionths of a meter in diameter. Once they have infected a person, the particles replicate in many human organs, including the liver, spleen, kidney, lungs and lymph nodes, destroying cells and leading to death in more than half the cases.

This cycle is repeating itself relentlessly in the outbreak zone of Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea. The toll continues to soar in what one expert, Michael Osterholm, has called “virus time,” and it is outpacing the decisions of nations. Last spring, much of the world wasn’t even listening to the cries for help from Doctors Without Borders, which has been at the front lines of fighting the virus in West Africa. Now, the alarms about cases in the United States have reached a crescendo, in waves of panic fueled by hyperactive news and social media. But the actual response on the front lines of the epidemic — in Africa — is lagging in what Mr. Osterholm called “bureaucratic program time.”

Debate in the United States continues to be focused on the wrong question: whether travel to this country from West Africa should be banned. As virtually every credible public health authority has said, it shouldn’t be. Restricting travel will not prevent potential Ebola carriers from reaching this country, only make them more difficult to track. Ron Klain, the veteran political manager appointed by President Obama to oversee the U.S. response, should start by rejecting these politically-motivated and irresponsible demands.

If there is something to panic about, it is the failure to get ahead of the outbreak in Africa. Should the international community not stop Ebola in the epicenter of the outbreak, it could well spread to other vulnerable regions with weak public health infrastructure, and then beyond in a tableau that will dwarf

today's crisis, which has so far killed at least 4,546 people and infected more than 9,100 in the three nations where it began.

On Friday, Christopher Stokes of Doctors Without Borders said Ebola was still out of control in the region, and it was "ridiculous" that volunteers for the charity are still bearing the brunt of care in the worst-affected areas, running about 700 of the 1,000 treatment beds available in the region. The United States, Britain and some other nations, after a slow start, have rallied with funding pledges and are now building more treatment facilities. While encouraging, Mr. Stokes told the BBC that the latest efforts are still "not having any significant impact on the epidemic and it won't now for maybe another month or month and a half."

Tolbert Nyenswah, the head of Liberia's response effort, was quoted by the Wall Street Journal as saying, "Tell the international community that they have failed Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea, and they are still failing. They knew our health system did not have the capacity." In addition to treatment facilities, the region desperately needs doctors and nurses to cope with the epidemic.

The experts are clear: What is required to prevent Ebola from spreading to the United States is quicker and more comprehensive action in Africa. The world needs to meet Ebola on virus time.

The Post Endorses Muriel Bowser For D.C. Mayor

[Washington Post](#), October 19, 2014

D.C. RESIDENTS have reason to be disaffected with city government and politics. The incumbent mayor has operated under the shadow of the illegal campaign fundraising that helped to put him in office. Three members of the D.C. Council left their offices in disgrace. This sad state of affairs played a part in the unusually low turnout for the April primary, and it may help explain why many voters say they remain uninspired by the mayoral election just 2½ weeks away.

We hope they look again. This is a critical election, and it offers a clear choice. Despite the ethical cloud that has hung over Mayor Vincent C. Gray and contributed to his defeat in the Democratic primary, he will leave office in January with the city on generally sound footing. Its finances are healthy, its schools are attracting more families every year and many neighborhoods are reinvigorated. His successor must maintain that momentum while providing the leadership to confront new challenges.

Muriel Bowser, Ward 4's representative on the council and the Democratic nominee, is the candidate best prepared to provide that leadership. We endorsed her in the primary but acknowledged it was not an easy choice because of the capable opponents then running against her. We faced no such dilemma this time. Neither council member David A. Catania (I-At Large) nor former council member Carol Schwartz comes close to Ms. Bowser in temperament, work ethic, ideas, policy understanding and balanced approach.

We don't discount Ms. Schwartz's past accomplishments (notwithstanding her wrong-headed opposition to the mayor's takeover of the schools) or her love of the city, but sentimentality cannot advance the District or the interests of its residents. She has failed to present a credible rationale for her independent candidacy.

Mr. Catania also can point to accomplishments in his 17 years on the D.C. Council, including his advocacy for same-sex marriage and his oversight of health care in the District. But he also has been on the wrong side of many important issues. If it were up to Mr. Catania, it is likely there would be no city-financed baseball stadium for the Nationals to play in and no convention center to attract visitor dollars, not to mention the hundreds of jobs created by both projects. The money-draining D.C. General Hospital

might still be limping along. That Mr. Catania seems unable to concede he might have been wrong is all the more troubling.

Also worrisome has been Mr. Catania's stewardship of the council's education committee, which roughly coincided with his interest in becoming mayor. Instead of forging a meaningful collaboration with the city's able schools chancellor, Kaya Henderson, he set out to pass a series of bills that were sure to capture headlines but would do little to improve schools. D.C. schools are on the mend because Mr. Gray and his predecessor, Adrian M. Fenty (D), put competent professionals in place and let them do the job. The well-documented concerns about Mr. Catania's temperament raise questions about what kind of leader he would be — "bully" is a word that crops up with disturbing frequency — and have been amplified by the often mean-spirited campaign he has run.

Ms. Bowser, by contrast, has grown only stronger as her candidacy has progressed. A lifelong Washingtonian, she is well positioned to bring substance to the "One City" motto that Mr. Gray articulated but had trouble fulfilling. She is committed to better serving longtime residents, especially the poor who have benefited least from Washington's rise, but also appreciates the urgency of attracting businesses and welcoming new residents. Her travel to other cities has given her insights into what works and what doesn't and bespeaks a refreshing willingness to admit there are things she doesn't know.

Those critical or jealous of Ms. Bowser have painted a caricature of a lightweight. That is not the tough politician we have come to know and admire in her seven years on the council. She strikes us as smart, capable and confident without being arrogant. On the council, she has learned the ins and outs of government, from zoning to ethics to tree canopies. As mayor she says she would set priorities, find the right people to pursue them — including a professional city administrator — and give them the support to get it right. She has said that chancellor Henderson and Police Chief Cathy L. Lanier would be among those on her team, if they agree to stay.

We enthusiastically endorse Muriel Bowser. She is the clear, best choice for voters on Nov. 4.

Standardized Tests Must Measure Up

By Arne Duncan

[Washington Post](#), October 19, 2014

As a parent, I want to know how my children are progressing in school each year. The more I know, the more I can help them build upon their strengths and interests and work on their weaknesses. The more I know, the better I can reinforce at home each night the hard work of their teachers during the school day.

The standardized tests my kids take are one gauge on the dashboard, but parents and educators know that tests are not the only indicator.

Last week, state education chiefs and district superintendents announced a plan to examine their assessment systems, ensure that assessments are high-quality and cut back testing that doesn't meet that bar or is redundant. I welcome that important step.

Parents have a right to know how much their children are learning; teachers, schools and districts need to know how students are progressing; and policymakers must know where students are excelling, improving and struggling. A focus on measuring student learning has had real benefits, especially for our most vulnerable students, ensuring that they are being held to the same rigorous standards as their well-off peers and shining a light on achievement gaps.

However, many have expressed concern about low-quality and redundant tests. And in some places, tests — and preparation for them — dominate the calendar and culture of schools, causing undue stress.

Policymakers at every level bear responsibility here — and that includes me and my department. We will support state and district leaders in taking on this issue and provide technical assistance to those who seek it.

To be clear: I strongly believe in using high-quality assessments, including annual tests, as one (but only one) part of how adults improve instruction and hold themselves responsible for students' progress. With my own kids, I know parent-teacher conferences, grades and other feedback round out the picture of whether they're on track.

After a generation of watching other nations surpass ours educationally, the United States is putting the building blocks in place for schools that will once again lead the world. But for this effort to pay off, political leaders must be both strong and flexible in support of the nation's educators.

America's schools are changing because our world is changing. Success in today's world requires critical thinking, adaptability, collaboration, problem solving and creativity — skills that go beyond the basics for which schools were designed in the past. But in recent decades, other countries have retooled their schools faster than we have.

We must do better. A great education isn't just what every parent wants for his or her child; it's a necessity for security in a globally competitive economy.

The good news is that, thanks to the hard work of educators, students and communities, America's schools have made historic achievements in recent years. The U.S. high school graduation rate is at an all-time high, and the places most committed to bold change have made major progress on the nation's report card. Since 2000, high school dropout rates have been cut in half for Hispanic students and more than a third for African Americans. College enrollment by black and Hispanic students has surged.

Perhaps even more important, educators are taking fundamental steps to help reclaim the United States' leadership in education. Throughout the country, students are being taught to higher standards, by teachers empowered to be creative and to teach critical thinking skills. Last year, nearly 30 states, led by both Republicans and Democrats, increased funding for early learning.

Yet change this big is always hard, and political leaders — myself included — must provide support and make course corrections where needed. We are asking a great deal of our educators and students. Despite their hard work, and a growing embrace of many of these changes, one topic — standardized testing — sometimes diverts energy from this ambitious set of changes.

Fortunately, states and districts are taking on this challenge — including places such as Rhode Island and New York state; St. Paul, Minn.; Nashville; and the District, where leaders are already taking actions to limit testing. As they and others move forward, I look forward to highlighting progress others can learn from.

States are also leading the way on improving test quality, building assessments that move beyond bubble tests and measure critical thinking skills and writing; the Education Department has provided \$360 million to two consortia of states to support that work. And to reduce stress on teachers during this year of transition, my department in August offered states new flexibility on connecting teacher evaluation to test results.

It's vital that political leaders stand behind changes that will prepare our young people for success in the real world — changes that educators have worked so hard to get underway. We must also stand behind states that have increased standards for learning, and where adults are holding themselves

responsible for the progress of all students. We must stand strong for responsible and equitable school funding. We must stand strong for making both preschool and college accessible to all.

And we must stand strong in the knowledge — not the belief but the knowledge — that great schools make a difference in the lives of all children.

The writer is U.S. secretary of education.

A Campaign With No Answers

By Ruth Marcus

[Washington Post](#), October 19, 2014

The closing days of a closely fought election rarely offer uplifting moments, but the 2014 season has been particularly dreary, nearly devoid of content and high on unedifying spectacle.

Perhaps the iconic moment came when former Florida governor Charlie Crist (D) faced an empty lectern for seven minutes while his Republican opponent, Gov. Rick Scott, sulked over Crist's insistence that he have a cooling fan at his stand. Seriously, seven minutes. At which point Scott blinked, and the debate that voters deserved could finally start.

But behavior that disrespects voters knows no partisan label. Consider Kentucky Democrat Alison Lundergan Grimes's steadfast refusal to say whether she voted for President Obama.

Grimes, seeking to unseat Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R), has obviously judged that the cost of ducking this reasonable question is less than the damage of offering an answer that would, presumably, align her with the president.

This strikes me as the wrong calculation: The voters who would be alienated by a straightforward answer are probably already lost to Grimes, but I can imagine wavering voters being turned off by her dodginess.

Even worse is Grimes's sanctimonious effort to wrap her evasiveness in patriotic bunting, the "sanctity of the ballot box" and the privacy protections for voters enshrined in the state Constitution.

"This is a matter of principle," Grimes said in a debate Monday. "I'm not going to compromise a constitutional right provided here in Kentucky in order to curry favor on one or the other side or for members of the media."

Spare me. Sure, the average citizen has every right to tell reporters to buzz off when asked how they cast their vote. But a politician whose job entails campaigning for politicians of her party? Who was an Obama delegate to the national convention? Who was all too happy to disclose the fact of her vote for Hillary Clinton during the 2008 Democratic primaries?

In the same category of behavior disrespectful to voters, I'd put the refusal of Kansas Senate candidate Greg Orman to tell the people of his state which party he supports. Orman, an independent hoping to unseat Sen. Pat Roberts (R), has said he would caucus with whichever party turns out to hold the majority.

Indeed, Orman manages to out-Grimes Grimes: While she won't say who she voted for in private, he doesn't want to talk about who he'll vote with in public.

Asked recently whether he owed the voters of Kansas an answer about which party he'd support, Orman non-answered, "I sort of reject the premise of that question. . . . I think it's an opportunity for Kansas to define the agenda in the United States Senate."

This is "Let's Make a Deal" politics, with voters relegated to guessing what's behind door No. 3.

And Orman isn't the only Monty Hall running. In South Dakota, former Republican senator Larry Pressler, running as an independent for his old job, is similarly coy. He has announced that "I don't agree

with Obama on very many things” and told the Hill newspaper he would be a “friend of Obama” in the Senate and had voted for the president twice.

I’m fine with running for office as an independent — there’s enough orthodoxy in both parties to make your head explode — but that’s different than running as a cipher. The ideological chasm between the two parties has grown so large that someone with fixed political convictions — other than that he should wield maximum influence — can’t plausibly waver between the two.

Not that the major-party candidates are covering themselves with glory this cycle. The Republican strategy boils down to yoking your Democratic opponent as tightly as possible to Obama. The champion may be North Carolina’s Thom Tillis, who managed, in the course of an hour-long debate with Sen. Kay Hagan, to cram in 10 references to her voting with Obama 96 percent of the time.

In a debate last week in Louisiana, Republican Bill Cassidy said of Sen. Mary Landrieu (D), “She represents Barack Obama. I represent you.”

The Democratic response is essentially: Barack who? Thus Landrieu’s retort: “While President Obama is not on the ballot, the future of Louisiana is.”

Perhaps campaigns are like childbirth: There is a natural human tendency to forget the nonsense (in the case of elections) or the pain (in the case of both elections and childbirth). But this one may take longer than the usual two years to forget.

Read more from Ruth Marcus’s archive, follow her on Twitter or subscribe to her updates on Facebook.

In Colorado, Overheated Rhetoric From ‘Mark Uterus’

By George F. Will

[Washington Post](#), October 19, 2014

DENVER

One of the wonders of this political moment is feminist contentment about the infantilization of women in the name of progressive politics. Government, encouraging academic administrations to micromanage campus sexual interactions, now assumes that, absent a script, women cannot cope. And the Democrats’ trope about the Republicans’ “war on women” clearly assumes that women are civic illiterates.

Access to contraception has been a constitutional right for 49 years (*Griswold v. Connecticut*, 1965). The judiciary has controlled abortion policy for 41 years (*Roe v. Wade*, 1973). Yet the Democratic Party thinks women can be panicked into voting about mythical menaces to these things.

One Democrat whose gallantry toward women is monomaniacal, Sen. Mark Udall (Colo.), is now uncomfortably known here as “Mark Uterus.” He is seeking a second term by running such a relentlessly gynecological campaign that the *Denver Post*, in endorsing his opponent, Rep. Cory Gardner, denounced the “shocking amount of energy and money” Udall has devoted to saying that Gardner favors banning birth control.

Actually, Gardner favors over-the-counter sales of oral contraceptives. In addition to being common sense, Gardner’s proposal is his way of making amends for formerly advocating a state constitutional “personhood” amendment (it is again on the ballot this year and will be decisively rejected for a third time) and for endorsing similar federal legislation that has zero chance of passage. By defining personhood as beginning at conception, these measures might preclude birth control technologies that prevent implantation in the uterus of a fertilized egg. On this slender reed, Udall leans his overheated accusations

that Gardner is bent on “trampling on women’s rights,” is on a “crusade” for “eliminating” reproductive freedoms and would “outlaw birth control.”

Gardner, 40, cherubic and ebullient, is a human sunbeam whose unshakable cheerfulness is disconcertingly authentic as he exclaims to the waiter at breakfast, “Thank you for your work this morning!” A fifth-generation Coloradoan who lives in a prairie town in a house once owned by his great-grandparents, Gardner is amused by an anomaly: “Udall looks like the Republican in this race — dour and angry.”

When Gardner ran an ad saying Udall is “a real nice guy” but too much a creature of Washington to change it (Udall’s father, an Arizona congressman, ran for president; Udall’s uncle was an Arizona congressman and interior secretary; Udall’s cousin is a senator from New Mexico), Udall, in high synthetic dudgeon, called the ad a reprehensible attack on his family. Which elicited this puckish headline in the Washington Examiner: “Cory Gardner calls Mark Udall ‘nice guy’; Democrats want ad pulled.”

In losing Colorado’s 2010 Senate race, the Republican candidate carried men by 14 points but lost women by 17. This 31-point gap will not be replicated this year. In a recent Fox News poll, Gardner trailed Udall among women by just 5 points while leading among men by 17. Independents favored Gardner by 15 points.

Barack Obama accepted the 2008 Democratic nomination here in a football stadium decorated with faux neoclassical columns made of plywood. He excoriated John McCain for having “voted with George Bush 90 percent of the time.” Ask Gardner to pass the salt and he will say: “Udall has supported Obama 99 percent of the time.” The world turns.

So does Gardner. Ross Kaminsky, a radio host here, writes:

“Gardner tells a personal story. ‘I was visiting a high school in Kit Carson, Colorado, when a young woman came up to me asking about in-state tuition for non-citizens. “I’m graduating at the top of my high school class, but my parents brought me here illegally when I was 5 years old and without in-state tuition I can’t afford college,” she told me.’ Gardner’s answer — that for several reasons this really needed to be dealt with as part of broader immigration reform — left him feeling unsatisfied even though it accurately represented his view. He continues: ‘Five years later, I went back to Kit Carson and sat down in a little restaurant for a quick bite. And who do you think ended up serving me? The same girl who five years earlier was the valedictorian of her high school.’ Gardner’s conclusion . . . is that this cannot be the best outcome for the girl, for her family, or for the state of Colorado.”

In order to change your mind, you have to have one. The “war on women” incantation is mindless — a substitute for thought. This is surely obvious to thinking women, including one Gardner knows in Kit Carson.

The Nasty Politicization Of Ebola

By Dana Milbank

[Washington Post](#), October 19, 2014

Francis Collins, director of the National Institutes of Health, administered a dose of truth to political Washington this week.

For this honest service, Collins was pilloried.

In an interview published Sunday night, Collins shared with the Huffington Post’s Sam Stein his belief that, if not for recent federal spending cuts, “we probably would have had a vaccine in time for this” Ebola outbreak.

This should not be controversial. His conjecture was based on cold budgeting facts. NIH funding between fiscal year 2010 and fiscal year 2014 had dropped 10 percent in real dollars — and vaccine research took a proportionate hit. Research on an Ebola vaccine, at \$37 million in 2010, was halved to \$18 million in 2014.

Officials at the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Disease report that budget cuts forced them to shelve 14 Ebola-related grants, roughly a quarter of the total. NIH was forced to prioritize spending to react to the most pressing current threats rather than potential ones, and because there was little Ebola activity at the time, shifting money to Ebola from, say, cancer or Alzheimer's research wasn't a viable possibility.

With Ebola vaccines now entering clinical trials, it's not much of a stretch to conclude that, with those extra research dollars, vaccines would now be on the market — potentially saving thousands of lives in Africa and avoiding panic in the United States.

Yet conservatives pounced. Commentator Michelle Malkin's Web site, Twitchy, called Collins a "fool" (this fool previously led the mapping of the human genome) and assembled tweets saying the Ebola vaccine could have been paid for with money spent on President Obama's vacations or the White House vegetable garden, among other things.

Republican candidates have begun making a campaign issue of waste at NIH and its sister agency, the Centers for Disease Control. "Have you seen what the NIH spends money on?" Sen. Rand Paul (R-Ky.) asked, mocking Collins's claim at a rally I attended Wednesday. "One hundred seventeen thousand dollars spent to determine that most monkeys are right handed, and like to throw poop with their right hand, apparently. Two-point-four million of the NIH dollars was spent on origami condoms."

The senator, who then proposed more budget cuts, ought to update his examples. The right-handed monkey study? Done between 1992 and 1997. Origami condoms? The new device worn by women could protect millions, particularly in Africa, from AIDS. But perhaps Paul, an ophthalmologist, thinks that's frivolous.

Collins, an evangelical Christian, was aghast that his remarks "turned into this really nasty political outcome that has resulted in attacks on NIH," he told me Thursday. "People are saying I'm overstating the circumstances, which I don't think I am."

Collins said he was equally appalled by an ad this week by the liberal Agenda Project Action Fund that juxtaposes Republicans saying the word "cut" with images of Ebola carnage. "Republican Cuts Kill," it concludes.

Collins sees his beloved NIH — for decades the beneficiary of broad bipartisan support — falling into the gaping maw of politics that has consumed most everything else. "I've tried so hard in the 21 years I've been at NIH," he said, "to keep medical research from becoming a partisan issue."

Even hardcore libertarians tend to agree that medical research and public health, like national defense, are among the few things that should be a federal responsibility. Eric Cantor, the recently deposed House majority leader, made a big push for government funding of medical research.

But while NIH funding grew steadily over the years, it leveled off at \$28 billion in 2004 and was at \$29.3 billion in 2013. When you factor in medical inflation, NIH's purchasing power is down 23 percent over that period.

Collins admits it's a mistake to think "throwing money at a medical problem automatically results in breakthroughs." But there are a few major research projects on the cusp of success that could bring financial benefits far beyond the cost — much as the U.S. government's \$3.8 billion initial investment in

Collins's Human Genome Project has fueled new medical industries and economic growth of as much as \$1 trillion.

Now, NIH-funded researchers are “a few years away,” Collins said, from a universal flu vaccine that could protect people against virtually all strains — even pandemics — without the need for annual shots. Yearly flu epidemics suck an estimated \$87 billion out of the U.S. economy and claim tens of thousands of lives; a pandemic strain could be much worse.

Who, of any political philosophy, would say it's not worth \$121 million — and more — for a universal flu vaccine?

Who would say, given the economic catastrophe that an Ebola outbreak could cause, that spending tens of millions more for an Ebola vaccine is wasteful?

Only a fool.

The West Is Paying Dearly For Cozying Up To Russia Over 25 Years

By Anne Applebaum

[Washington Post](#), October 18, 2014

Looking back over the past quarter-century, it isn't easy to name a Western policy that can truly be described as a success. The impact of Western development aid is debatable. Western interventions in the Middle East have been disastrous.

But one Western policy stands out as a phenomenal success, particularly when measured against the low expectations with which it began: the integration of Central Europe and the Baltic States into the European Union and NATO. Thanks to this double project, more than 90 million people have enjoyed relative safety and relative prosperity for more than two decades in a region whose historic instability helped launch two world wars.

These two “expansions,” which were parallel but not identical (some countries are members of one organization but not the other), were transformative because they were not direct leaps, as the word “expansion” implies, but slow negotiations. Before joining NATO, each country had to establish civilian control of its army. Before joining the European Union, each adopted laws on trade, judiciary, human rights. As a result, they became democracies. This was “democracy promotion” working as it never has before or since.

But times change, and the miraculous transformation of a historically unstable region became a humdrum reality. Instead of celebrating this achievement on the 25th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall, it is now fashionable to opine that this expansion, and of NATO in particular, was mistaken. This project is incorrectly “remembered” as the result of American “triumphalism” that somehow humiliated Russia by bringing Western institutions into its rickety neighborhood. This thesis is usually based on revisionist history promoted by the current Russian regime — and it is wrong.

For the record: No treaties prohibiting NATO expansion were ever signed with Russia. No promises were broken. Nor did the impetus for NATO expansion come from a “triumphalist” Washington. On the contrary, Poland's first efforts to apply in 1992 were rebuffed. I well remember the angry reaction of the U.S. ambassador to Warsaw at the time. But Poland and others persisted, precisely because they were already seeing signs of the Russian revanchism to come.

When the slow, cautious expansion eventually took place, constant efforts were made to reassure Russia. No NATO bases were placed in the new member states, and until 2013 no exercises were conducted there. A Russia-NATO agreement in 1997 promised no movement of nuclear installations. A

NATO-Russia Council was set up in 2002. In response to Russian objections, Ukraine and Georgia were, in fact, denied NATO membership plans in 2008.

Meanwhile, not only was Russia not “humiliated” during this era, it was given de facto “great power” status, along with the Soviet seat on the U.N. Security Council and Soviet embassies. Russia also received Soviet nuclear weapons, some transferred from Ukraine in 1994 in exchange for Russian recognition of Ukraine’s borders. Presidents Clinton and Bush both treated their Russian counterparts as fellow “great power” leaders and invited them to join the Group of Eight — although Russia, neither a large economy nor a democracy, did not qualify.

During this period, Russia, unlike Central Europe, never sought to transform itself along European lines. Instead, former KGB officers with a clearly expressed allegiance to the Soviet system took over the state in league with organized crime, seeking to prevent the formation of democratic institutions at home and to undermine them abroad. For the past decade, this kleptocratic clique has also sought to re-create an empire, using everything from cyberattacks on Estonia to military invasions of Georgia and now Ukraine, in open violation of that 1994 agreement — exactly as the Central Europeans feared.

Once we remember what actually happened over the past two decades, as opposed to accepting the Russian regime’s version, our own mistakes look different. In 1991, Russia was no longer a great power in either population or economic terms. So why didn’t we recognize reality, reform the United Nations and give a Security Council seat to India, Japan or others? Russia did not transform itself along European lines. Why did we keep pretending that it had? Eventually, our use of the word “democracy” to describe the Russian political system discredited the word in Russia itself.

The crisis in Ukraine, and the prospect of a further crisis in NATO itself, is not the result of our triumphalism but of our failure to react to Russia’s aggressive rhetoric and its military spending. Why didn’t we move NATO bases eastward a decade ago? Our failure to do so has now led to a terrifying plunge of confidence in Central Europe. Countries once eager to contribute to the alliance are now afraid. A string of Russian provocations unnerve the Baltic region: the buzzing of Swedish airspace, the kidnapping of an Estonian security officer.

Our mistake was not to humiliate Russia but to underrate Russia’s revanchist, revisionist, disruptive potential. If the only real Western achievement of the past quarter-century is now under threat, that’s because we have failed to ensure that NATO continues to do in Europe what it was always meant to do: deter. Deterrence is not an aggressive policy; it is a defensive policy. But in order to work, deterrence has to be real. It requires investment, consolidation and support from all of the West, and especially the United States. I’m happy to blame American triumphalism for many things, but in Europe I wish there had been more of it.

Islamic State’s Evil Highlights The Compassion Of Its Victims

By Stephanie Saldaña

[Washington Post](#), October 19, 2014

In the past two months, the world has watched helplessly as the Islamic State released four videos of foreign captives being beheaded in Syria. Much has been said about what we can learn about evil from these videos. Not enough has been said about what we can learn about good.

The first video, of James Foley’s beheading, appeared Aug. 19. The images were ubiquitous in newspapers and on social media. Foley, dressed in an orange jumpsuit, was on his knees. A masked man held a knife to Foley’s throat. On recordings, we heard the executioner speak in a British accent, warning that Steven Sotloff, an American freelance journalist, would be next.

More videos followed. Sotloff was murdered in September. Then David Haines, followed by Alan Henning. Though the Islamic State had long been carrying out public executions, the Internet expanded “public” to a horrifying new dimension. Now a single video could terrify millions, and there was evidence the tactic was working: In a recent poll, 94 percent of Americans said that they had heard about the beheadings.

Only with the latest video, showing the death of Henning and the appearance of the 26-year-old American aid worker Abdul-Rahman Kassig as the next potential victim, did I realize the message of terror was backfiring. These videos weren’t making me afraid. They were giving me hope.

The evil, so potent in the first video, remained static. With each new version, we learned nothing new about it. The man, now known to the world as “Jihadi John,” looked the same. The orange jumpsuit remained the same, as did the knife, the method of killing, the desert. That English accent designed to chill us.

But each time the good was different. We learned that Foley, in addition to being a journalist, was a devout Catholic who once taught inner-city kids. In Syria, he raised money to buy an ambulance for a hospital. His kindness did not stop while he was in captivity, where he shared blankets and food rations. In a letter home, he urged his grandmother to take her medicine.

We met Sotloff and read his article on desperate civilians in Aleppo who could not afford bread or fuel. It opened with a 12-year-old boy chopping wood for his family, an incident Sotloff captured because he had learned to speak the boy’s native language — Arabic. Testimonies emerged that Sotloff, who was Jewish and the grandson of Holocaust survivors, fasted on Yom Kippur in captivity.

With Haines, we met a humanitarian worker supplying tents and food to refugees. With Henning, we were introduced to a British taxi driver who took unpaid leave to deliver aid with his Muslim friends. Many media outlets stopped showing images from the videos. Instead, we saw Henning’s smiling face as he held a Syrian child in his arms.

So when Kassig — known as Peter to his friends — appeared as next in line to die, we were not surprised to learn that he is remarkable. A former Army Ranger, he founded his aid organization on a shoestring budget, smuggling supplies across the Syrian border. He used his first-aid training to teach Syrians to heal wounds. He wrote to his parents from captivity: “If I do die, I figure that at least you and I can seek refuge and comfort in knowing that I went out as a result of trying to alleviate suffering and helping those in need.”

We have always known that such heroes exist. We just don’t often find them in the news. They are journalists who bear witness to suffering, even as they fall under shelling. They are aid workers who deliver flour across checkpoints. They join other unknown heroes — parents trying to feed their kids in wartime, teachers trying to hold classes. They stop at nothing: If there is no ambulance, they buy one; no doctor, they train one; no voice, they become one. They are hope, in places where we have long since ceased to believe hope is possible.

We have no power over whether the Islamic State will release more videos. But we can control what we choose to learn from them. Let them be reminders not of how much evil is in the world but of how much good.

Liberty, Equality Aren't Mutually Exclusive

By Danielle Allen

[Washington Post](#), October 19, 2014

Our country is in trouble. Congress's approval rating hovers near its lowest level since Gallup polling began, social protest rates are as high as they've been since the 1960s and the least among us — poor African Americans — are worse off than a decade ago. These are indicators of democracy running off the rails. To them one might add the stagnation of earnings for most Americans and a new regime of surveillance, wedded to ever-extending bureaucratic regulation.

One cause of our trouble is that we have come to believe that liberty and equality are in conflict, and this affects our policy debates. This misunderstanding began in reaction to Marx, took hold during the Cold War and found new strength in today's libertarianism. But it's wrong — and until we return to understanding how liberty and equality reinforce each other, we're not going to solve our problems.

For millennia, political thinkers understood equality and liberty as concepts that provided mutual support. The ancient Athenians, who invented formal democracy, also conjured up the concepts of "equality before the law" and "an equal right to speak." They opened political participation to all men regardless of economic status, while naming naval vessels things such as Eleutheria, or "Freedom." The republican citizenry of ancient Rome conducted its politics under the banner of "equal liberty" and celebrated a mixed constitution that, as Cicero wrote, had "enough power in the magistracies, enough authority in the advice given by leading citizens, and enough liberty in the people." For a time, that mixed constitution brought "equality," "something free men are hardly able to do without for very long," as he put it. The United States' founding similarly drew liberty and equality together. In Abraham Lincoln's formulation, the new nation was "conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal."

The obvious flies in the nectar — slavery and patriarchy — actually reinforce these conceptual points. Those who were not equal were not free and vice versa.

Among citizen men, in Athens, Rome and America, equality and liberty were concepts understood to support and sustain each other. Bonds of political and social equality among the citizens were necessary to forge institutions that would protect each individually from domination by the others and all together from domination by external powers.

Up through the early 19th century, the search for definitions of popular government and the welfare of the people (or *salus populi*, to quote Cicero and Locke) yielded a diversity of approaches to equality. The ancient Athenians, for instance, and the early modern Americans, focused on political and social equality. The French cared about both of those but also pursued equalizing economic policies. There was, in short, a centuries-long fluidity of analysis around the concepts of liberty and equality — but also a basic orientation toward their fundamental harmony.

This disappeared with the rise of communism. Marx's famous words, "A spectre is haunting Europe," introduced an age that assimilated the belief that liberty and equality stand opposed. That age is with us still in the form of contemporary libertarianism.

In the "Communist Manifesto" of 1848 Marx wrote: "The proletariat will use its political supremacy to wrest, by degrees, all capital from the bourgeoisie, to centralize all instruments of production in the hands of the state Of course, in the beginning this cannot be effected except by means of despotic inroads on the rights of property and on the conditions of bourgeois production." Over half a century, the question of the meaning of equality and its connection to liberty came to turn entirely around a definition understood to require the equalization of property through forceful re-appropriation.

In this country, as the argument against socialism and communism gathered force, the battle was explicitly cast as a contest between equality and liberty by thinkers such as William Graham Sumner, the late 19th-century chair of political economy at Yale University. He wrote in an argument against socialism: “Let it be understood that we cannot go outside of this alternative: liberty, inequality, survival of the fittest; not-liberty, equality, survival of the unfittest.”

By the Cold War, both communists and libertarians structured their ideas, to an important degree, around the tenet that there is “an Eternal Conflict” between liberty and equality, to quote the title of a 1960 article from the *Freeman*, a publication of the Foundation for Economic Education. Iconic thinkers on the right adopted the theme and built economic theories around it: Ludwig von Mises, Friedrich Hayek and Milton Friedman. But liberals and thinkers on the left — Isaiah Berlin, John Rawls and Ronald Dworkin — also assumed a basic opposition between liberty and equality, even if they sought to undo it.

The stakes of this conceptual error are significant. We might, for instance, view our partisan gridlock as the sad result of a conceptual error applied over long duration. The Democratic Party, which now wears the mantle of equality — if any party does — thinks it cannot in a full-throated way befriend liberty. The Republican Party, which wants to style itself the party of liberty, thinks it can give no quarter to equality. But these ideals belong together like hand and glove. If the command economy was an extreme political form, so too is the libertarian counter-vision.

It’s now 25 years since the Berlin Wall fell — long past time, in other words, to dismantle the second wall established by a putative opposition between liberty and equality. We are overdue for a return to the task of ascertaining how those two concepts work in tandem, and what institutional forms can best sustain them as the twinned ideals that they are.

Our own political tradition gives us the resources for doing that, beginning with the Declaration of Independence. I would urge us all to renew our education there, diving afresh into the meaning of equality, and discovering just how it can live harmoniously with liberty.

WILMINGTON NEWS JOURNAL STORIES

Downstate Delaware’s Hidden Heroin Epidemic

By Adam Taylor

[Wilmington \(DE\) News Journal](#), October 19, 2014

Southern Delaware has a bigger heroin problem than does its larger neighbor to the north, state and local police say. But when an addict hits bottom here, he or she could be offered a tent rather than a bed in a halfway house.

Treatment services are sparse, requiring addicts hitch rides or drive 30 miles to counseling sessions and support group meetings. There are no state-funded detox or inpatient rehabs downstate, as there are in New Castle County. And experts say there is a culture of denial among residents in Kent and Sussex counties about the widespread abuse of heroin.

“A lot of it has to do with the rural culture in which people don’t reach beyond their inner circles or families to find ways to solve their problems,” says Joseph Connor, director of the Addictions Coalition of Delaware. “They solve them internally.”

William Bethard is a lifelong Sussex County resident who entered the vortex of opiate abuse at 18 when he got hooked on prescription-opiate Percocet pills. He snorted his first bag of heroin on the Fourth of July three or four years ago (he can’t remember which) while working in the kitchen of an Italian restaurant in Rehoboth Beach.

Bethard went outside, higher than he'd ever gotten on pills, and watched the fireworks display. He had never been happier.

But his life quickly slid toward the abyss. He began burglarizing homes to feed his habit. He lived in a rundown hotel in Rehoboth, even slept in the woods behind the Rehoboth Kmart.

He lost his mother's trust after stealing her boyfriend's credit card to buy Christmas presents for his drug dealer's family – a \$2,000 bill for a flat-screen TV, a bicycle and an X-box. The dealer traded an equal amount of heroin.

In September, the 24-year-old had strung together a nine-month stint of staying clean by spending 120 days in Sussex County Correctional Institution and an additional 150 days in court-mandated rehab in New Castle County.

Once that was done, though, he had nowhere to go.

24 year-old William Bethard tells a story of a road to the bottom and the struggles to get clean sober from a heroin addiction in Sussex County.

Ten days later Bethard walked into the A.C.E. Center, a resource facility in Seaford for Sussex County residents who are down on their luck for a variety of reasons. Bethard thought he might get a referral to a halfway house, maybe a voucher for a hotel.

He was taken aback by the center's approach for handling the typical homeless person's needs: a tent and a stump speech from Executive Director Jim Martin about finding a thick patch of woods outside the town limits where he wouldn't be rousted by the police.

"That's how we do it in Sussex County," said Martin, noting that the center often holds events at which tents for the homeless are donated. "We work with what we have and engage in direct action when we have to help people."

Fortunately for Bethard, a group of Christian outreach volunteers led by John Rittenhouse walked into the A.C.E. Center before Martin handed over the tent. Rittenhouse started the group Shift Destiny because, after his son became a heroin addict and was sentenced to prison for a series of drug crimes, he wanted to help others avoid his boy's fate.

"I learned that I can't help my son – only he can do that," Rittenhouse said. "But I can try to help another father's son."

Rittenhouse's son, from Seaford, is a lot like Bethard. He turns 25 today, is in prison for burglary and other charges and is scheduled to soon enter Gateway Foundation, the same Delaware City rehab Bethard went to.

The Shift Destiny volunteers allowed Bethard to stay in their homes, and their charity allowed him a safe place to stay when he was in the fragile stages of early recovery.

Bethard later arranged to stay with a cousin in Lewes, and that's where he is today – working on a family farm and attending three 12-step meetings a week. He has been free from heroin for nearly 10 months.

"I got tired of the monotony of addiction," he said. "I just felt like I was always under it's thumb. Today I feel good. I'm finally optimistic about my future."

John Rittenhouse, of Seaford, has found help in dealing with his son's heroin addiction through his work with Shift Destiny church. His son is currently serving prison time for drug related crimes.

Starts in WilmingtonPolice calls rise rapidly in Kent and Sussex

Much of the heroin in Kent and Sussex counties comes from Wilmington, Delaware State Police spokesman Paul Shavack said. A downstate addict in Kent and Sussex counties has to pay \$10 to \$15 for a single bag that costs, on average, \$5 to \$10 in New Castle County, he said.

Bethard said a lot of his contacts, which he described as “a little gang, like a batch of ruffians,” used to make the run to Wilmington to buy heroin and re-sell it in Sussex County.

He said the lack of visible drug activity downstate is an illusion.

“The only difference between Wilmington and down here is we’re spread apart a little bit,” he said. “The same amount of heroin is here. We just don’t have a bunch of corners you can stand on. Everyone just sits in their cars instead.”

“The only difference between Wilmington and down here is we’re spread apart a little bit. The same amount of heroin is here. We just don’t have a bunch of corners you can stand on. Everyone just sits in their cars instead.”

William Bethard, 24, who used to make the run to Wilmington to buy heroin and re-sell it in Sussex County

Responses by police departments throughout the state for heroin-related activities exploded in Kent and Sussex counties in 2012 because opiate addicts switched to heroin when authorities cracked down on Percocet and Oxycontin, making those drugs too expensive.

From 2012 to 2013, state police say, increases in police responses were higher downstate than upstate. Departments responded to 125 percent more heroin calls in Kent County and 70 percent more in Sussex in that time period. The jump in New Castle County was 56 percent.

As of Oct. 1, the amount of responses in 2014 in Sussex County have already exceeded 2013’s total, Shavack said. Ocean View Police Chief Kenneth McLaughlin said he’s not surprised.

“I saw crack cocaine blow through our small, rural communities in the ‘80s and how incredibly widespread and damaging it was,” McLaughlin said. “Eventually it waned, but I’m not seeing the same waning trend with heroin. It seems like with each passing day, it’s getting stronger.”

Earlier this month, a Selbyville-area mother was arrested after her 4-year-old daughter took 249 bags of heroin to a day care center and started handing it out, thinking they were packets of candy.

“Heroin is everywhere in this area, from the swamp to the sea,” Selbyville Police Chief W. Scott Collins said.

Lacking servicesDownstate detox coming

Forty-one percent of overdose deaths in Delaware from all substances, including alcohol, have taken place in Kent and Sussex counties this year, according to state statistics.

Pauline Powell of Lewes started an Attack Addiction chapter in Sussex County because her 36-year-old son has struggled with heroin and other drugs since he was a teenager. Today he’s buying Suboxone on the street – a drug supposed to help addicts detox from opiates, but is often abused.

Powell says Sussex County desperately needs a detox center and an inpatient rehab so residents don’t have to go upstate for treatment.

“Not only more services, but more choices are needed,” she said.

A downstate detox is on the way, Delaware Health and Social Services Secretary Rita Landgraf said. She hopes it will be open in January and wants it to be near the Kent-Sussex line to serve both counties. The 16-bed facility would allow addicts to stay for several days, and would also have more beds for 23-hour observations to assess treatment needs.

Connections Community Support Programs has been awarded the contract to run the detox and is looking for a site now, company CEO Cathy McKay said.

Connections has downstate facilities – in Smyrna, Dover, Millsboro and Seaford – that offer medication-assisted and outpatient treatments. Because of the exploding demand from addicts trying to get off heroin, Connections may expand those services, so she sees the need for a detox.

In the past three months, Connections' Millsboro facility admitted 144 new clients. They get 10 new referrals a day. While Connections used to mostly serve a mix of people with problems with alcohol, cocaine or methamphetamine, now most of the clients are heroin addicts.

"We could have admitted 144 more if we had the capacity," McKay said. "There was a belief when we started that facility three years ago that there was less of a problem there than other places, but that has turned out not to be true. There has been a real increase in heroin addiction that started from prescription opioid addiction."

At Gaudenzia on West 10th Street in Wilmington, half the clients seeking rehab are from downstate, the company's Division Director Steve Blank said. The facility has 16 beds for young adults who get inpatient drug and alcohol treatment for up to six months. There are another 16 beds that are used for people who have completed treatment and are waiting for transitional housing opportunities to open up or for those who are waiting for a bed at a rehab to become available.

About 55 people have been admitted into the facility this year, Blank said. Seventy-five percent have successfully completed treatment. Of those, 95 percent leave Gaudenzia with a job lined up. Many of those jobs are in New Castle County, Blank said.

"Because there isn't a lot offered [downstate] and there are more resources upstate, most of the people who come to us from Kent and Sussex counties wind up staying in the Wilmington area," he said.

Sussex County has felt the impact with the rise of heroin entering the illegal drug markets of small rural communities. Law enforcement, treatment center and addicts all struggle to overcome the drugs ramification on society.

Barriers for addicts Stigma and even religious beliefs

Powell said she hopes the Attack Addiction chapter will help increase awareness of the heroin problem, as well as to destigmatize the problem so more addicts will seek help.

But several barriers exist that make those goals more difficult than in New Castle County, she said.

Mandell Much, clinical director of Aquila, a treatment center for adolescents in Georgetown, said the culture of self-reliance makes addictions treatment difficult.

"Many families think they'll just figure it out, manage it or live with it," Much said. "They don't say, 'We need help.'"

Addictions Coalition's Connor, a 30-year Sussex County resident, said some residents' religious beliefs also can get in the way of addicts getting well.

"Certain sectarian organizations don't ascribe to treatment," Connor said. "Having faith and spirituality is helpful, but addiction can't just be prayed away."

Transportation issue 90-minute one-way trips

There are many hard-core heroin addicts in Sussex County who don't drive, which makes it tough to get treatment if they decide to get clean, Connor said.

"Effective public transportation in Sussex County is minimal at best," he said.

That's why Martin, the director of the A.C.E. Center, considers used bicycles to be as meaningful a donation as tents. "If you don't have a car in Sussex County, you're dead in the water," he said.

For some counselors at Aquila, that often means picking up their clients and bringing them back to Georgetown, Clinical Director April Lathbury said. A typical route has a counselor leaving the Georgetown office to pick up one client in Bethany Beach, another in Lewes, a third in Harbeson, then back to the office for a group session. The trip can take more than 90 minutes each way.

Counselor Julie Landis said some parents try to use distance traveled as a reason to forgo help for their children. If that happens, she does home visits.

"Life in Sussex County, you don't really blink about driving 20 minutes to go to the grocery store or the movies or anything like that," Landis said. "The parents will use that as an excuse sometimes to not engage in treatment. So having community-based treatment allows us to move past those excuses and be in the home and really address what the real issues are."

One 23-year-old Dagsboro woman who has been free from heroin for several months said she went to treatment in New Castle County because there are more Narcotics Anonymous Meetings to choose from. She stays in New Castle County from Friday night to Sunday afternoon, attending a week's worth of meetings in a weekend.

Kris Arway of Millsboro said her 23-year-old son had to go to Florida to stay clean for 60 days. The state of treatment is so bad in Sussex County that an employee at one treatment center encouraged her to buy Suboxone off the street until there was treatment space for her son.

"So that's what I did," she said.

Arway has been to both of Attack Addiction's Sussex chapter meetings. She hopes to help make a difference before people like her son die from heroin overdoses.

"We have an opportunity to change the way addiction is addressed in southern Delaware, but we have to open our eyes down here," she said. "I miss my son's dry wit, his heart of gold, his contagious laugh. But I'm not naive. I know I might never see them again."

Reporters Esteban Parra and Sean O'Sullivan contributed to this story.

Delaware Ramps Up Ebola Preparations

By Jen Rini

[Wilmington \(DE\) News Journal](#), October 19, 2014

Delaware has always crowed about being in the sweet spot of the East Coast, between Washington, D.C., and New York.

But when it comes to the deadly Ebola virus, that might not be a good thing – because so many people travel through Delaware in route to one city or the other.

That means Ebola could be traveling through the state, too. But Rita Landgraf, secretary of the Delaware Department of Health and Social Services, stopped short of saying the First State is likely to have an Ebola case.

"It's hard to predict. It's not like our hurricane," said Landgraf. "We have no precedent that has been in the United States relative to Ebola. We can't predict if it will hit or not."

With two Texas nurses infected with Ebola after being exposed to a patient there, Delaware hospitals and health care organizations are ramping up and fine-tuning plans for how to handle any suspected cases in the First State.

Christiana Care Hospital expects it would get only one or two patients as opposed to dozens – and none in the immediate future.

"We do have the window of time where we are really actively working on getting people trained so they can take care of patients," said Dr. Marci Drees, infection prevention officer and hospital epidemiologist.

Among the precautions taken at hospitals statewide:

- Beebe Healthcare already has put a test patient through the emergency room process to check readiness. "We didn't tell the staff," said Marcy Jack, vice president of quality, safety and risk management at Beebe Healthcare. "We had someone present [with symptoms] to see if the correct

questions for detection were asked. We pretty much have an emergency notification tree so communication can happen quickly.”

- Christiana Health Care System nurses and staff are screening patients at all emergency departments for travel histories if they show any symptoms consistent with Ebola, such as fever and stomach pains. Fewer than five were identified as worrisome. All had been to Africa, but only one had traveled to the affected regions. Each patient was taken out of the waiting room, put in a private room and evaluated by health care staff in basic protective equipment. Ebola was ruled out in each case.

Said Drees: “I would rather have 100 false alarms than any patient slip through.”

- Bayhealth Kent General in Dover acted quickly when a Liberian child was admitted for possible exposure to the infectious disease Oct. 4. Ebola was almost immediately ruled out due to travel screening questions.

- New Castle County’s Emergency Medical Services units always use protection procedures established for the HIV and AIDS epidemic, designed to prevent any contact with infected blood. Their teams use personal protective equipment, especially gloves, every day and sanitize ambulances with bleach. With the threat of Ebola, the unit’s 911 communication centers are asking additional questions about travel history as they process calls, and staff are required to use extra precautions when inserting intravenous needles and collecting blood, said Larry Tan, chief of the unit.

After two healthcare workers in Texas contracted Ebola, paramedics in Delaware are taking extra precaution to deal with any possible infected patients. 10/17/14

While one Texas man has died from Ebola and two of his nurses have gotten sick, the United States is not in the throes of an epidemic like West Africa, where 4,500 people have died. The World Health Organization has predicted 10,000 new cases a week in the next month, and many of those will be outside West Africa because people move around so much in the modern world.

Public concern was heightened last week by stories about the conditions in which the Texas nurses worked. They had to tape their protective garments closed while dealing with projectile vomiting and explosive diarrhea. Clothing and bedding soiled by human waste and body fluids piled up in a room. Health officials suspect the nurses were exposed when they took off their protective suits.

After that report surfaced, state and federal officials took action. President Obama named former Vice President Chief of Staff Ron Klain to coordinate the nation’s response to Ebola.

And the state asked all Delaware health care organizations to use WHO guidelines, which include having health care workers supervised while putting on and taking off protective gear. While some Delaware hospitals did use the WHO method, others relied on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommendations suggested by the state in August – or older plans put in place for protection from HIV or the H1N1 swine flu virus.

“I know fear is out there,” added Leslie Verucci, president of the Delaware Nurses Association, who compared the public fear to the panic that followed the number of HIV and AIDS cases increasing in the 1980s.

Verucci said hospitals need to ensure the safety of their health care workers when dealing with the violent symptoms of Ebola.

“I believe this opened everyone’s eyes,” Verucci said. “Someone who is felt to have not done anything wrong still was contaminated somehow.”

Avoiding human error

The Ebola virus is spread person-to-person through direct contact with infected bodily fluids such as blood, urine, sweat, semen, breast milk and feces. Like HIV, Ebola can be spread through cuts, sexual intercourse or if infected bodily fluids get into a person's eyes, nose or mouth.

While the infection is not airborne, if an Ebola patient sneezes on someone and the fluid touches a person's eyes, nose or mouth, it can move through the mucus membranes to infect the person contaminated. The same is true if the saliva of a coughing Ebola patient moves through membranes of another person.

The virus can live outside the body for a couple of hours on a surface such as a countertop, but up to six days in fluid, such as blood. Household cleaners like bleach will kill it.

The threat of such infection, however, depends on many things – including the symptoms of the already infected person.

A fever is the first sign that a person is infectious, but that's also when the virus is least likely to be passed to someone else, said Dr. Karyl Rattay, director of the state's Division of Public Health. As the disease progresses to severe vomiting, diarrhea and hemorrhaging, the infection is more virulent, more present in the body and more likely to infect someone else if exposed.

It can take as little as two days before a person shows symptoms, or up to 21 days.

All state cases of Ebola will be tracked by the state Department of Health and Social Services in concert with the Division of Public Health, and Landgraf will provide alerts to health organizations and citizens. The Department of Health will work with the Delaware Emergency Management Agency and the Department of Safety and Homeland Security as it would with any emergency disaster planning, Landgraf said.

While isolating the infection is the first order of business, "we also want to communicate effectively so the public is able to protect themselves," Landgraf said. "But the last thing we want to do is enhance any kind of panic."

She said she has full confidence that area hospitals, including Nemours/Alfred I. duPont Hospital for Children, St. Francis, Nanticoke, Beebe, Christiana Care and Bayhealth, are ready.

"They are prepared to take patients," Landgraf said. "You have to plan for the worst and hope for the best ... I'm confident that we have a communication system with our health systems on an ongoing basis. If anything shifts, we will know that and we will act accordingly."

If a suspected patient is identified, the state's operational plan calls for Homeland Security to enforce isolation in hospitals as well as at any private locations, such as apartments. Security teams would be responsible for disposing of medical waste safely and effectively, she said.

Hospitals already have waste disposal procedures in place that wouldn't be changed much if there was an Ebola patient. At Christiana, a third-party waste management company disposes of all hazardous waste, protective suits, equipment and cleaning supplies. With Ebola, Drees said cleaning staff will be hyper-vigilant in disinfecting and sanitizing the entire room, using as much protective equipment as possible.

Stringent precautions with blood samples also are in place. Patients who have returned from Africa routinely have blood tests for malaria and typhoid fever. Now, Drees said, lab workers and nurses will do as much testing as they can in a suspected patient's room. The samples would be kept separate from the general lab and packaged securely.

The state is identifying "alternative care sites" across Delaware that could be used in an overcapacity situation, but Landgraf wouldn't speak to the type of sites being considered or where they are. At a minimum, these sites would need to have ample water supply and cleanliness procedures.

In case of a patient overflow or a case that the CDC would want to monitor, the state has identified additional CDC-specified hospitals in the area. The closest would be the National Institutes of Health facility in Bethesda, Maryland, where one of the Texas nurses was sent.

A shared responsibility

Community health providers, from emergency transport to urgent and primary care clinics, are being kept informed by the state.

There's already a heightened sense of awareness, said Tan.

At Christiana Care, infectious disease specialists are working toward being able to separate an entire wing for suspected patients, said Drees.

Having designated areas for nurses to safely and securely put on and take off their protective equipment is central to the design. Minimizing the number of staff members in contact with the patient is also important. The hospital doesn't want students, trainees or ancillary staff in contact with an infected patient, she said, noting that isolation rooms could be configured quickly.

In some ways, Ebola is less concerning than other diseases out there, Drees said. But even in a first-world medical system, the death rate from Ebola is unknown, so vigilance in preparation and training is paramount.

Beebe has been fine-tuning standard infection protocols for more than a month, said Jack. That included sending a test patient through the system. The hospital expects to be able to track any patient suspected of Ebola, including which staff member the patient came in contact with, and what equipment was used in treatment.

The registration area will be the first line of defense at Delaware hospitals, with staff working desks inquiring about symptoms and travel to Ebola-affected regions. Any suspicious patient would be moved immediately into isolation. All emergency-room patients will receive notices on Ebola urging them to contact a staff member if they have any symptoms.

"Isolation for Ebola there doesn't need to be a specialized setup per se, just a private room," Jack said. The hospital can turn any private patient room into an isolation room, she said.

Nurses and other health care staff are also constantly undergoing in-person and online training regarding the personal protective suits as well as how to treat infected patients. Beebe uses the WHO guidelines that require a supervisor present when changing suits, and asks workers to double-glove when carrying a patient or handling infected bodily fluids.

"It is very difficult to put the equipment on and off in a manner that is not exposing. Taking off equipment is the highest risk," Jack said.

Beebe has on hand gloves that extend over isolation gowns, respirator masks, face shields, head covers and extra-long shoe coverings – and most of it has been there for two months. The hospital requires all staff who come in contact with a patient to don a suit. It also asks visitors to do that.

"We have definitely made sure we have enough supplies," Jack said. "As far as getting more supplies, that's a daily fluctuation."

Colin Faulkner, director of public safety for Kent County, said that the standard gowns, face shield and gloves the EMS units have are enough to protect staff when they come in contact with HIV, hepatitis C or influenza patients.

He's not sure how easy it's going to be to secure enough WHO-certified protection suits, which offer double the protection of a standard infection-control suit. Tan said that the WHO suits can cost \$12 each if bought in bulk. Standard protective suits are around \$7. Right now, New Castle EMS only has a couple of dozen. Faulkner says he's waiting on more suits from the state Division of Public Health.

“Ebola, it’s a scary possibility. It’s a very scary possibility,” Faulkner said. “I’m sure that it wasn’t expected in Dallas. If we don’t do our jobs and we don’t do it right, we risk affecting a lot of people. You have to treat it almost like a loaded gun, with a very light trigger.”

WILMINGTON NEWS JOURNAL EDITORIALS

Don’t Wait For Heroin-addiction Solutions

[Wilmington \(DE\) News Journal](#), October 19, 2014

My husband and I became aware of the difficulty in obtaining services for a person with addictions in Sussex County, who was reaching out for help, when we tried to find services for a family member.

All the avenues we tried told us either there were no beds available or the wait for services was unrealistically long. My awareness was heightened further while waiting from 8 a.m. until 3 p.m., after a two-hour drive, for our loved one to be admitted into the Kirkwood Detox Center. In addition to our own family’s struggle to obtain services, the stories I heard when speaking with other individuals who were also waiting to be admitted into, or who had just been discharged from, Kirkwood lead me to the conclusion that services for individuals with addiction disease in Delaware were totally unacceptable.

Furthermore, the court’s habit (pardon the pun) of incarcerating individuals with mental health and substance abuse issues without offering any form of treatment also should be examined in depth. Because of our personal experiences, I felt the need to raise community awareness to the problems of addiction and the raging heroin epidemic that is occurring in our state with the goal of effecting change for the better. The incident with the little only emphasizes how great that need is.

Thankfully, the outcome of that situation was no worse than it was.

After conversations with several officials, I was advised to check www.atTAcKaddiction.com, the website for a proactive group in New Castle County who were working on the same issues that we felt needed to be addressed.

As I believe joining forces with others speaks with a louder voice to effect change for the greater good, my husband and I attended several of the group’s meetings and, with their blessing, started the Sussex County Chapter of atTAcK addiction. We can be contacted at; attackaddictionsussexde@comcast.net. All are welcome to our meetings on the third Wednesday of each month in Bethel U.M.C.’s Fellowship Hall, 129 W. Fourth St., Lewes, with doors opening at 6:30 p.m. Following a half-hour of fellowship, our meeting begins at 7 p.m. To date we have had two meetings with an average attendance of 20 people. Since starting the downstate group, many individuals have reached out to us, both in gratitude and expressing the need for more awareness and many more services in Sussex County.

The goals of atTAcK addiction, Sussex County, are to reduce the stigma attached to the disease of addiction, particularly with respect to heroin addiction; to bring more, and a wider variety, of effective choices of treatment, including a Sussex County Detox and Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Center; to increase awareness education within our schools, starting at an early age, to the dangers of alcohol and drug use; to raise community awareness of the heroin epidemic by breaking through the barriers of denial that exist here, which only serve to prevent change from happening; and to offer compassion and support to families who have lost a loved one to this disease and to those in recovery.

We believe that by working proactively with our state and local representatives that we can make a difference.

Pauline Powell is head of the Sussex County Chapter of Attack Addiction.

Legal Pot? Is That What We Really Want?

[Wilmington \(DE\) News Journal](#), October 19, 2014

S.J. Perelman, the humorist who wrote some of the Marx Brothers' zaniest lines, once said, "I don't know anything about medicine, but I do know what I like."

That, apparently, is the way many Delawareans feel, especially about marijuana. A majority of those polled are in favor of legalizing it. Legalizing it, not just decriminalizing it, but allowing the open sale and use of marijuana like any other consumer product. (Well, not just any consumer product. We imagine some of the marijuana legalization group would not mind banning sugary drinks and other fast foods.)

Marijuana decriminalization is long overdue. It does not make sense to put people in jail for what really is a minor offense. Public opinion is gathering behind a move to greatly reduce penalties on personal use of marijuana.

However, that is a short step. Legalization is the giant step that many are now advocating. Washington and Colorado went in that direction and many people think that is just fine.

There is more to legalization than just mild recreational use of pot. For example, medical questions still remain. Earlier this month a study in the journal *Addiction* pointed to strong evidence that chronic marijuana use can cause physical harm. This is not a "Reefer Madness" type of study, but one that looked at evidence over 20 years. It showed that people do not overdose from marijuana, but chronic use may alter brain structure and function. Part of the reason may be the fact that the THC content in marijuana has been increasing over the years. THC is the chemical that causes marijuana's psychological effects.

The upshot is that we still have a lot to learn about the long-term use of marijuana.

Here's where a lot of people invoke S.J. Perelman's rule of medicine. That may be well and good for an individual, but society should think about the consequences before throwing out all regulations.

Another point to consider is legal. Marijuana use, even medicinal use, is against federal law. If Delaware legalized marijuana growing and use, that does not mean Maryland, Pennsylvania and New Jersey would follow suit. A Delaware pot tax might make a few legislators happy for a spell, but legalization would create a host of law enforcement problems here.

The point is that the decriminalization-legalization issue is not settled. We should have a debate. We should hear from all sides, especially health officials.

As a society, we obviously need to make our drug laws rational. We have to think beyond clichés such as "we lost the war against drugs." We have to start asking second-stage questions like "And then what?" Say Delaware legalized marijuana. Then what? Would we have an open, unregulated market? Age limits? Quantity limits? Who could grow it? Who could sell it? What about a tax? And what about any damage it would cause?

We may not like to be bothered with details. We may only care about a personal effect, but we should remember that there are always consequences.

In Overcoming Addiction, There Are No Shortcuts

By John F. Rittenhouse

[Wilmington \(DE\) News Journal](#), October 19, 2014

As parents of a heroin addict, we live a life never anticipated. We successfully raised three children, vacationed, worshiped together, enjoyed the good things together and loved family time. When our youngest son launched, we felt like "we made it" and focused on our future as a couple.

In early 2011, we learned our son had used Percocets and Oxycontin, leading to heroin. His needing money, followed by missing funds, credit cards, jewelry and other items opened our eyes that something was wrong. We cycled through the stages of shame, regret, anger and disbelief. After a year, some friends in the fight introduced a Narcotics Anonymous group where I reluctantly visited as I was ashamed, and felt like a failed father. But my wife and I were desperate for help. We went, we learned and we grew. If you are new to the fight, GO! Do not hesitate! NA circle provides perspective, folks who “get it” and information for the fight of “tough love.”

Equally, we found a support circle of praying friends inside our own church. At one point, we had six families impacted, and we supported and grew together. Talk to your pastor or priest. Find emotional, spiritual and family support networks for the battle ahead.

What have we learned? Heroin use is starting as young as 12, and 19 is the average age of new users. Percs and Oxys are leading the path to heroin use. Heroin is cheap and abundant in Delaware. Recovery rate is low. Life expectancy, five years. The clock is ticking. Time is not your friend. Let him or her hit “their bottom” quickly as possible!

Getting our son hungry, homeless and helpless was how we had to love him. But not in anger, nor in rage, but always assuring him, “We love you. We forgive you and are ready when you are ready to get help.” There are NO shortcuts. The risk is high. The end is death or recovery. Period. Today our son is alive, sitting in a correction facility, at bottom, and ready to enter the Gateway program. Not the path we would have chosen, but thankful he is still in the fight.