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Subject: Fw: Vice Presidential News Clips for Friday, October 17, 2014
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----- Original Message -----

From: Bulletin Intelligence [mailto:VP@BulletinIntelligence.com]
Sent: Friday, October 17, 2014 06:14 AM Eastern Standard Time
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Subject: Vice Presidential News Clips for Friday, October 17, 2014

FOIA-6

TO: THE VICE PRESIDENT AND STAFF

DATE: FRIDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2014 -- 6:15 AM EDT

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

BIDEN IN THE NEWS:

- + Biden Touts Infrastructure Work In Philadelphia (AP)
- + Biden In Phila. To Promote Port, Dredging (PHILLY)
- + Biden Barges In: VP Visits Philly Waterway (NBCNEWS)
- + VP Biden Visits Philadelphia To Check Progress Of Delaware River Dredging Project « CBS Philly (KYWTV)
- + VP Joe Biden Visits Penn's Landing (WCAUTV)
- + Biden Speaks On Infrastructure In Philadelphia (WPVI)
- + Biden Travels To Burlington County For Belgard Fundraiser (BURCT)
- + First Lady, VP To Stump For Minnesota Democratic Candidates (KBJRTV)
- + Biden Will Head To Boston (NECNTV)
- + The Vice President Has Nothing To Apologize For (LONISHER)
- + An Early Look At Joe Biden And Mariska Hargitay's New Domestic Violence Campaign (WP)
- + Joe Biden And Mariska Hargitay Team Up Against Campus Rape (PEOPLE)
- + Jill Biden To Campaign For Nunn In Georgia (HILL)
- + Jill Biden to raise money for, campaign with Michelle Nunn (MYAJC)

- + Biden's Son Hunter Discharged From Navy Reserve After Failing Cocaine Test (WSJ)
- + Biden's Son 'Embarrassed' Over Navy Ouster (NYT)
- + Biden's Son 'Embarrassed' By Discharge From Navy After Drug Test (LAT)
- + Biden's Son Discharged From Navy Reserve (USAT)
- + Biden's Son Discharged From Navy After Positive Cocaine Test (WP)
- + Hunter Biden Discharged From Navy Reserve For Positive Cocaine Test (WT)
- + Biden's Son Discharged From Navy Over Drug Use (AP)
- + Biden's Son Discharged From U.S. Navy Reserve After Drug Test: Sources (REU)
- + Report: Joe Biden Son Failed Navy Drug Test (POLITICO)
- + Report: Biden's Son Discharged From Navy After Failing Cocaine Test (HILL)
- + Biden's Son Discharged From Navy After Testing Positive For Cocaine (CNN)
- + Biden's Son Discharged From Navy After Reportedly Testing Positive For Cocaine (FOX)
- + Biden's Son, Hunter, Discharged From Navy Over Failed Cocaine Test : The Two-Way : NPR (NPR)
- + Joe Biden's Son Hunter Kicked Out Of Navy For Cocaine (NBCNEWS)
- + Hunter Biden Discharged From Navy Reserve Over Cocaine (MSNBC)
- + Joe Biden's Son Hunter Biden Discharged From Navy After Positive Cocaine Test (ABCOTUS)
- + Failed Drug Test Leads To Discharge Of Biden's Son (WILNJ)
- + Cocaine Busted: Biden's Son Booted From The Navy After One Reserve-duty Weekend (EXAMINER)
- + Vice President Biden's Youngest Son Discharged From Navy Reserves After Testing Positive For Cocaine: Report (NYDN)
- + Hunter Biden Kicked Out Of The Navy For Failing Cocaine Test (NYPOST)
- + VP Biden's Son Kicked Out Of Navy Reserve (BOSH)
- + Hunter Biden Discharged From Navy (BIZINDER)
- + Top News, Latest Headlines, Latest News, World News & U.S News (UPI)

NEW YORK TIMES AND WASHINGTON POST OP-EDS:

- + Keeping Ebola At Bay (NYT)
- + Evo Morales Of Bolivia And Democracy (NYT)
- + Why North Carolina's Senate Race Has A Wide Gender Gap (NYT)
- + The Dark Market For Personal Data (NYT)
- + The Case For Low Ideals (NYT)
- + What Markets Will (NYT)
- + Don't Depend On Those Frozen Eggs (NYT)
- + Asia's American Angst (NYT)
- + Traveling While Arab (NYT)
- + Bipartisan Solutions, Not Blame, Can Help In Managing Ebola (WP)
- + The Mayor's Plan To Replace D.C. General To House The Homeless Is On The Right Track (WP)
- + Obama's Failing Strategy In Yemen (WP)
- + Is Sex Only For Rich People? (WP)
- + Stock Market Turmoil And The Global Debt Trap (WP)
- + Ebola Challenges America's Ability To Adapt (WP)
- + Fight Fear Of Ebola With The Facts (WP)
- + Nothing To Fear But Panic Itself (WP)
- + On Ebola, We Need A Dose Of Candor (WP)
- + Charles Krauthammer: Ebola Vs. Civil Liberties (WP)
- + Obama Needs To Dial Back His Syria Strategy (WP)

WILMINGTON NEWS JOURNAL STORIES:

- + Dropping Aetna From Medicaid Means Job Losses (WILNJ)
- + Delaware Poll: Legalize Marijuana (WILNJ)
- + M&T Bank Advertising Deceptive, Agency Says (WILNJ)
- + News Journal Keeping Needs Of Readers In Mind (WILNJ)
- + Delaware Colleges To Waive Application Fees (WILNJ)

- + No Polar Vortex In NOAA Winter Forecast (WILNJ)
- + Plan For New Delaware Container Port Could Create 4,000 Jobs (WILNJ)
- + Strine Appoints Panel To Review Court System (WILNJ)
- + White House Official Visits, Lauds Prestige Academy (WILNJ)
- + Coming Soon: Low-digit Surf Fishing Tags (WILNJ)
- + Wilmington Defines Possible Development District (WILNJ)

WILMINGTON JOURNAL NEWS EDITORIALS:

- + Goals Should Be To Improve Courts (WILNJ)
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BIDEN IN THE NEWS:

BIDEN TOUTS INFRASTRUCTURE WORK IN PHILADELPHIA (AP)

Associated Press, October 16, 2014

PHILADELPHIA - Investing in the country's infrastructure is needed for the kind of jobs workers can "raise a middle class family on," Vice President Joe Biden said during a trip to Philadelphia on Thursday.

Biden toured a dredging barge being used in a 102.5-mile project to deepen a shipping channel that stretches from the Ben Franklin Bridge to the Delaware Bay and is meant to bring larger container ships to the port.

Such infrastructure enhancements are "what we desperately need in this country now" to promote manufacturing and jobs, Biden said.

"Where's it written that the United States will not be the manufacturing capital of the world in the 21st century?" Biden asked a small crowd gathered in front of the barge. "Manufacturing is coming home for the United States."

The \$300 million project would deepen the 40-foot Delaware River channel to 45 feet. It started in March 2010, but work on the 2.5-mile section in Philadelphia just started last month. Officials are aiming to complete the entire deepening in 2017.

The 40-foot channel "cuts us out of a whole lot of commerce. It cuts us out of a whole lot of new jobs if they cannot come up the Delaware River," Biden said. "We can't afford to be left out of this. The dredging project here is going to have a profound economic impact when it's finished."

The project would add jobs and increase construction along the river, he said.

"The average person rides over the (Ben Franklin Bridge) and they look down and they have, understandably, no idea how much of their economic well-being depends on what happens at this port," Biden said. "We need this work, we need this port."

Biden was joined by U.S. Sen. Bob Casey and U.S. Reps. Chaka Fattah and Bob Brady, all Pennsylvania Democrats.

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BIDEN IN PHILA. TO PROMOTE PORT, DREDGING (PHILLY)

By Chris Palmer

Philadelphia Inquirer, October 17, 2014

Vice President Biden toured a dredging barge at Penn's Landing on Thursday to show support for the project to deepen the Delaware River shipping channel.

Biden, the latest high-profile politician to visit the region in recent days, was flanked by a phalanx of Pennsylvania Democrats - U.S. Sen. Robert P. Casey Jr., and U.S. Reps. Robert A. Brady and Chaka Fattah.

Before delivering remarks on the ongoing deepening of the Delaware, Biden and the delegation were taken on a tour of the large barge by Brian Puckett, project manager for Great Lakes Dredging & Dock Co.

The vessel's main feature, a dredging bucket that can haul as much as two dump trucks, immediately caught Biden's eye.

"That's a hell of a bucket," the vice president said after walking a gangplank onto the ship.

Biden's visit was to highlight the project, which aims to deepen about 100 miles of the waterway between the Delaware Bay and Philadelphia.

Initiated in March 2010, the project could be completed in 2017, according to Ed Voigt, a spokesman for the Army Corps of Engineers.

Biden noted that the effort will allow larger container ships to travel the river, which he called essential for economic development.

"We need this work," he said. "We need this port."

Biden said Brady has been an enthusiastic advocate for the project - even calling his cellphone while Biden was on a trip to Germany.

President Obama has proposed \$35 million for the project in his 2015 fiscal budget. The overall cost for the multiyear deepening will likely be around \$300 million, Voigt said.

Biden said the project will not only keep the Philadelphia port competitive, but will help support middle-class jobs and extend the legacy of the waterway.

"The Delaware River has been the heart of commerce for this valley for 300 years," he said.

Michelle Obama and Hillary Clinton each visited Philadelphia to campaign for Democratic gubernatorial candidate Tom Wolf, and New Jersey Gov. Christie stopped at Valley Forge Military Academy and College last week to stump for a fellow Republican, Gov. Corbett.

President Obama is also expected to campaign for Wolf in Philadelphia before the Nov. 4 election. cpalmer@phillynews.com 609-217-8305 @cs_palmer

BIDEN BARGES IN: VP VISITS PHILLY WATERWAY (NBCNEWS)

NBC News, October 17, 2014

Vice President Joe Biden toured a dredging barge with Great Lakes Dredge & Dock members on Thursday, at Penn's Landing along the Delaware River in Philadelphia. Biden discussed the importance of investing in the nation's infrastructure during his visit to the waterfront.

VP BIDEN VISITS PHILADELPHIA TO CHECK PROGRESS OF DELAWARE RIVER DREDGING PROJECT « CBS PHILLY (KYWTV)

By Mike DeNardo

KYW-TV Philadelphia, October 16, 2014

PHILADELPHIA (CBS) - Vice president Joe Biden toured a dredge boat along the Delaware riverfront today, to promote the ongoing project to deepen the river's shipping channel.

Biden said the dredging project to deepen the Delaware River channel to 45 feet has to continue if the Port of Philadelphia is to remain competitive.

In his speech at Penn's Landing, Biden said 135,000 area jobs are directly and indirectly linked to the ability of ships to navigate the Delaware.

Until the project is completed, Biden says, Philadelphia will lose some business:

"It cuts us out of a whole lot of commerce - cuts us out of a whole lot of good jobs if they cannot come up the Delaware River."

The dredging job, already more than halfway finished, needs 76 million federal dollars over the next two fiscal years.

Project manager Brian Puckett, of the Illinois-based Great Lakes Dredge and Dock Company, says that would be money well spent.

"It's absolutely imperative for our economy," Puckett said today.

VP JOE BIDEN VISITS PENN'S LANDING (WCAUTV)

WCAU-TV Philadelphia, October 17, 2014

Vice President and Delaware-native just landed in the city of Brotherly Love. He'll address the public on the importance of improving infrastructure.

BIDEN SPEAKS ON INFRASTRUCTURE IN PHILADELPHIA (WPVI)

WPVI-TV Philadelphia, October 17, 2014

Vice President Joe Biden says investing in the country's infrastructure is needed to support what he called "good paying jobs you can raise a middle class family on."

BIDEN TRAVELS TO BURLINGTON COUNTY FOR BELGARD FUNDRAISER (BURCT)

By David Levinsky

Burlington County (NJ) Times, October 16, 2014

MAPLE SHADE - Vice President Joe Biden paid a visit to Burlington County on Thursday to lend some fundraising help to Democrat Aimee Belgard's 3rd Congressional District campaign.

Biden headlined a private fundraiser for Belgard at Sensational Host caterers on Route 73. The event was closed to the press, but the Democrat's campaign released a statement from the Burlington County freeholder and a photo from the event.

"I'm thrilled that Vice President Biden visited Burlington County today to support my congressional campaign," Belgard said in the statement. "His leadership and support were really inspiring to our supporters as we are less than three weeks from Election Day. Our campaign, which is one of the most competitive in the country, has great momentum with our strong fundraising quarter, tremendous grassroots support and it was further bolstered today by Vice President Biden's strong commitment to join us in our fight for middle-class families."

Belgard is running against Republican Tom MacArthur for the open seat of Rep. Jon Runyan in the 3rd District, which is made up of almost all of Burlington County and a large portion of Ocean County.

The race was picked early on to become one of the most competitive House contests in the nation and one of the best pickup opportunities for Democrats to flip a seat to their column.

But a poll released Tuesday by Monmouth University gave MacArthur, a former insurance CEO, a 10-point edge among likely voters with another 6 percent still undecided.

Campaign finance reports submitted to the Federal Election Commission on Wednesday showed Belgard had raised more than \$1.4 million as of Sept. 30, but her campaign was still being outspent by MacArthur thanks in large part to \$4 million in loans the Republican made to his own campaign.

The Democratic Congressional Campaign also has spent more than \$1.2 million on cable television advertisements attacking MacArthur and his former company, York Risk Services.

Belgard's campaign did not release the amount of money raised at Thursday's event.

The Burlington County freeholder previously has received fundraising help from House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi as well as New Jersey U.S. Sen. Cory Booker.

Biden's visit came the day after President Barack Obama was scheduled to travel to New Jersey for a private Democratic fundraiser in Union County. Obama canceled the trip in order to meet with his cabinet to coordinate a response to the domestic Ebola crisis.

FIRST LADY, VP TO STUMP FOR MINNESOTA DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATES (KBJRTV)

By Kevin Jacobsen

KBJR-TV Duluth (MN), October 17, 2014

St. Paul, MN (NNCNOW.com) - Several of Minnesota's Democratic candidates are expected to get some big name support next week.

Michelle Obama will make a stop in the Twin Cities during the week stumping for Senator Al Franken and Governor Mark Dayton.

On Thursday, Vice President Joe Biden will travel to Hibbing for a rally to help Representative Rick Nolan.

Just last Friday, Former President Bill Clinton was in Minnesota to lend his support to Gov. Dayton and Sen. Franken.

New Jersey Governor Chris Christie, meanwhile, campaigned with Minnesota's Republican Gubernatorial candidate, Jeff Johnson on Monday.

BIDEN WILL HEAD TO BOSTON (NECNTV)

By Allison Sonfist

NECN-TV Boston, October 17, 2014

Vice President Joe Biden will be at two fundraisers in Boston, Massachusetts, later this month.

One will be for Martha Coakley's gubernatorial bid. The other is for the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee.

Meanwhile, Coakley is hoping her campaign will get a boost from a visit by former President Bill Clinton. Clinton is scheduled to be at Clark University in Worcester on Thursday.

President Barack Obama has endorsed Democrat Gina Raimondo for Rhode Island governor.

Late Wednesday, the White House, however, announced Obama was canceling Thursday trips to Rhode Island and New York to monitor the government's Ebola response.

For up-to-the-minute news and weather, be sure to follow us on Twitter and like us on Facebook. Sign up for our new breaking news email alerts by clicking [here](#).

THE VICE PRESIDENT HAS NOTHING TO APOLOGIZE FOR (LONISHER)

By Alfonse D'Amato

Long Island (NY) Herald, October 17, 2014

The vice president has nothing to apologize for

Nassau County's source for local news, breaking news, school district updates sports, entertainment and shopping

Vice President Joseph Biden has been wrongly forced to embark on a Middle East apology tour in the wake of statements he made regarding the U.S.'s allies in the Middle East.

The vice president's troubles began a couple of weeks ago, during a question-and-answer session at Harvard University. He stated that the biggest problem the U.S. faces in the region, in dealing with Syria and the rise of ISIS, is our allies.

"They poured hundreds of millions of dollars and thousands of tons of weapons into anyone who would fight against Assad," Biden said, referring to Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, "except that the people who were being supplied were Al Nusra and Al Qaeda and the extremist elements of jihadists coming from other parts of the world."

The vice president stated the facts. This is what the Turks, Saudis and Emirates did - they armed the enemy. Turkey's porous borders have allowed thousands of terrorist militants to cross into Syrian and Iraqi battlefields. Even with the Islamic State taking control of Kobani, a Syrian town right on the Turkish border, Turkish troops watched through a chicken-wire fence.

Turkey's president, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, will not make a firm military commitment to the U.S., and refuses to send troops across the border as massacres are taking place less than a mile away. This is how one of our allies is supposed to act?

After apologizing to Turkey, Biden was then forced to issue the same apology to Saudi Arabia.

Imagine that. After stating the obvious, that Turkey has allowed foreign fighters to cross into Syria, Biden said that Turkey, the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia had funneled weapons and other aid to extremist groups.

Remind me, what's wrong this statement? It was nothing but the truth.

While Saudi Arabia and the UAE take part in airstrikes against the militants in Syria, they also use U.S. arms and protection to nurture, protect and finance terrorist organizations.

There's no doubt in my mind that the Saudis are playing this game two ways. As our men and women risk their lives overseas to stop the brutality taking place in Syria and Iraq, the Saudis continue to aid and abet terrorist organizations.

The media should be ashamed for the way they jumped all over Biden. This was no gaffe. He never should have had to apologize, and this latest media hoopla has turned political correctness to hypocrisy. If anyone owes anyone an apology, it is our government, which should be apologizing to the public for not using our power and clout to force our allies to truly combat terrorism.

Erdogan, our supposed ally, tells us that he refuses to send in ground troops because a no-fly zone has not been set up in Syria. This comes at a time when ISIS is expanding its control over Syria less than a mile from his border. Despite the fact that there were 19 U.S.-led airstrikes, ISIS militants continue to gain control of Kobani. As the brutal battle rages on, Turkey continues to sit and watch, because Erdogan believes that the U.S. should be fighting Assad's forces with the same strength and energy as it is combating ISIS.

What kind of ally refuses to play its part, and allows a major threat to America's national security to gain more ground? Mr. Vice President, politics may have forced you to apologize, but Americans should know about the duplicity of our so-called allies.

Meanwhile, the Ebola virus has claimed its first victims in the U.S. Why has there not been more action from the Obama administration?

A carrier of the virus may not show symptoms for up to 21 days, meaning that even someone who appears to be healthy could be spreading the virus. This is a great threat to the New York area, considering that John F. Kennedy International Airport is one of five airports used by a majority of

people who fly to the U.S. from West Africa.

The airport screening is playing Russian roulette, and nothing more than a ploy to placate the legitimate concerns of the American public. No one should be permitted to come here from those countries in West Africa where the Ebola epidemic is rampant.

Al DAmato, a former U.S. senator from New York, is the founder of Park Strategies LLC, a public policy and business development firm. Comments about this column? ADAmato@liherald.com.

AN EARLY LOOK AT JOE BIDEN AND MARISKA HARGITAY'S NEW DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CAMPAIGN (WP)

By Alyssa Rosenberg

Washington Post, October 16, 2014

The USA Network is well known for its so-called "blue sky" series. USA shows are set in locations with great weather, such as Miami and the Hamptons, and feature exceedingly good-looking (and diverse) casts bantering and displaying high levels of competence. But these sunny exteriors have more serious underpinnings.

Broadcast networks have tried to diversify their casts in recent seasons, recognizing that characters of color and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) characters who get to have relationships can be a significant audience draw. They are latecomers to the strategy, though: USA (and the CW, another smart, under-covered network) has been working at becoming more representative for years. Five USA series have regular or recurring LGBT characters (two of those series have non-white LGBT characters). Six have significant characters of color.

Showrunners on USA Network shows also often meet with people who work in the field, whether at advocacy groups such as the NAACP and GLAAD or the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. This is hardly uncommon practice, though networks do not usually take pains to explain to viewers what parts of their favorite shows were inspired by real-life conversations. USA frequently does so in public service announcements that air during the relevant broadcasts.

The network even recruited President Obama to tape an introduction to "To Kill a Mockingbird" when USA re-aired the classic courtroom drama, and former President Bill Clinton shot a similar spot for "Philadelphia."

USA's latest get is Vice President Joe Biden, who draws on his experience drafting the Violence Against Women Act, which became law in 1994, for a PSA series with "Law & Order: Special Victims Unit" star Mariska Hargitay, which will air during a marathon of that series this weekend. The network gave me an early look at one of the three spots that will be part of the campaign to share with you:

Maile Zambuto, chief executive of Joyful Heart, Hargitay's foundation for survivors of sexual assault, domestic violence and child abuse, helped pick the episodes that will be airing in the marathon, which is pegged to the No More campaign. Biden and Hargitay are wearing No More buttons in their PSA.

"Selecting episodes for the marathon was a collaborative process," Zambuto wrote in an e-mail.

"Mariska, the NO MORE team, USA Network, writers and producers worked together to identify episodes that speak to different aspects of these issues—teen dating violence, campus sexual assault, male sexual abuse, the cycle of violence."

The hope is that survivors recognize that they are not alone - and that the people who might be in a position to help victims of such violence recognize abuse and assault for what they are.

"Domestic violence is never the victim's fault," Biden says in the PSA. After a fall dominated by coverage of Ray Rice's assault on the woman who is now his wife, during which the Baltimore Ravens tried to paint the altercation as a fight between equals, that message is one worth broadcasting loudly, and not just to hard-core "Law & Order: SVU" fans.

JOE BIDEN AND MARISKA HARGITAY TEAM UP AGAINST CAMPUS RAPE (PEOPLE)

People, October 17, 2014

In this season of college homecomings coinciding with Domestic Violence Awareness Month, Vice President Joe Biden and Law & Order: SVU star Mariska Hargitay have teamed up to tell victims of campus sexual assault that the powerful duo has got their backs.

"Know that it's not your fault and you're definitely not alone," Hargitay says in a new public-service announcement debuting Sunday during USA Network's SVU marathon.

"We stand with you," adds Biden, "because one is too many."

The video, produced for the NO MORE movement by Hargitay's Joyful Heart Foundation, is just the latest in a string of costarring roles for Biden and Hargitay, who share a commitment to combatting abuse of women.

"Joe Biden started the Violence Against Women Act 20 years ago and he was truly a visionary," Hargitay told David Letterman earlier this month. "Our missions are aligned and we have come together and done a bunch of work."

That included flying on Air Force Two - "a huge thrill for me," she says - to visit the National Domestic Violence Hotline headquarters in Texas last year.

"The crimes on Law & Order: SVU are sometimes fictionalized," Hargitay says in the PSA. "But sexual violence on college and university campuses is all-too real. And we cannot stand by while it happens."

"It's time," says Biden, "for all of us to speak up and end sexual assault."

JILL BIDEN TO CAMPAIGN FOR NUNN IN GEORGIA (HILL)

By Justin Sink

The Hill, October 17, 2014

Second lady Jill Biden is heading to Georgia on Friday for a series of fundraisers and campaign events for Democratic Senate candidate Michelle Nunn.

Polls show Nunn gaining momentum in her race against GOP businessman David Perdue to replace retiring Sen. Saxby Chambliss (R).

Biden will attend three fundraisers during her two-day stint in Atlanta: an event for the Democratic National Committee and two that directly benefit Nunn's Senate campaign. The second lady and Nunn will also appear together at a community service event at the Fort Street United Methodist Church.

With the president's approval ratings sinking to record lows, Democrats have relied on other administration officials - including the Bidens and first lady Michelle Obama - to shoulder the brunt of campaign activities, especially in toss-up districts.

Georgia represents one of the party's best opportunities to take a seat from Republican control. A pair of polls from WRBL and SurveyUSA released this week have shown Nunn with a small lead over Perdue.

But Nunn has worked to distance herself from the president. Earlier this week, she refused to answer when a tracker from Republican research group Rising Response tried to ask if she had voted for President Obama.

JILL BIDEN TO RAISE MONEY FOR, CAMPAIGN WITH MICHELLE NUNN (MYAJC)

By Daniel Malloy

Atlanta Journal-Constitution, October 16, 2014

Dr. Jill Biden, wife of Vice President Joe Biden, is headed to Atlanta on Friday to raise money for the party and Democratic U.S. Senate hopeful Michelle Nunn. The two also will appear at a community service-themed event.

Here's the itinerary the White House just sent over:

[Friday] evening, Dr. Biden will attend an event for the Democratic National Committee at a private residence [in Atlanta]. This event is closed press.

On Saturday, Dr. Biden will attend the Hands On Atlanta event with Michelle Nunn at the Fort Street United Methodist Church. Dr. Biden's remarks at 9:00 AM are open press.

At 11:30 AM, Dr. Biden will attend an event for Michelle Nunn at a private residence. This event is closed press.

At 3:30 PM, Dr. Biden will attend an event for Michelle Nunn at The Sound Table. This event is closed press.

Joe Biden appeared with Nunn earlier this year, as did First Lady Michelle Obama. We don't expect to see the fourth member of the quartet, President Barack Obama, at her side.

BIDEN'S SON HUNTER DISCHARGED FROM NAVY RESERVE AFTER FAILING COCAINE TEST (WSJ)

Lawyer Pursued Military Service Relatively Late as a Public-Affairs Officer

By Colleen McCain Nelson And Julian E. Barnes

Wall Street Journal, October 17, 2014

Full-text stories from the Wall Street Journal are available to Journal subscribers by clicking the link.

BIDEN'S SON 'EMBARRASSED' OVER NAVY OUSTER (NYT)

By Helene Cooper

New York Times, October 17, 2014

WASHINGTON - Hunter Biden, the younger son of Vice President Joseph R. Biden Jr., failed a drug test and was discharged this year from the Navy Reserve, people familiar with the matter said on Thursday.

Mr. Biden, 44, tested positive for cocaine, those people said.

In a statement provided by his lawyer, Thomas M. Gallagher, Mr. Biden said that he was "embarrassed that my actions led to my administrative discharge." He added that he respected the Navy's decision.

Mr. Biden was commissioned as an ensign on May 7, 2013, and assigned to a public affairs reserve unit in Norfolk, Va.

He called it "the honor of my life to serve in the U.S. Navy," adding "I deeply regret" the actions that led to being discharged. "With the love and support of my family, I'm moving forward," he said in the statement.

A person close to the decision said that Mr. Biden was not treated differently from any other Navy Reserve sailor.

Mr. Biden was tested for drugs in June 2013, after he reported to his unit in Norfolk, and the result was positive for cocaine, according to the people familiar with the matter. The Navy said he was discharged in February.

It was unclear why Mr. Biden decided to join the Navy Reserve while in his 40s. He needed a waiver because of his age. He received a second waiver because of a drug-related incident when he was young, said the people familiar with his discharge, which was first reported in The Wall Street Journal.

Mr. Biden's brother, Beau Biden, served in the Delaware Army National Guard and was deployed to Iraq for a year. Beau Biden now serves as the Delaware attorney general and plans to run for governor in 2016.

Hunter Biden, who is married with two children, is a lawyer and a partner at Rosemont Seneca Partners, an investment company. In May, he was appointed to the board of Burisma Holdings, a Ukrainian energy company.

Mr. Biden's mother and his younger sister were killed in an automobile accident in 1972, in which he and his brother were seriously injured.

BIDEN'S SON 'EMBARRASSED' BY DISCHARGE FROM NAVY AFTER DRUG TEST (LAT)

By Ryan Parker

Los Angeles Times, October 17, 2014

Hunter Biden, son of Vice President Joe Biden, said Thursday night that he was embarrassed by the Navy Reserve's decision to discharge him, which the Navy reportedly did because he tested positive for cocaine.

He was discharged in February after testing positive in June 2013, one month after being commissioned as an ensign, according to a source familiar with the situation, ABC News reported.

In a statement to the Los Angeles Times, Biden, 44, said he was trying to move on with his life.

"It was the honor of my life to serve in the U.S. Navy, and I deeply regret and am embarrassed that my actions led to my administrative discharge," Biden said. "I respect the Navy's decision. With the love and support of my family, I'm moving forward."

Neither Hunter Biden nor his attorney had additional comments.

Hunter Biden, an attorney and managing partner of the investment firm Rosemont Seneca Partners, is the second son of the vice president. His brother, Beau Biden, is the Delaware attorney general.

The vice president's office declined to comment on Hunter Biden's situation.

Follow Ryan Parker for breaking news at @theryanparker and on Facebook.

BIDEN'S SON DISCHARGED FROM NAVY RESERVE (USAT)

By David Jackson

USA Today, October 17, 2014

Hunter Biden, the son of the vice president, was discharged from the Navy Reserve this year after testing positive for cocaine, The Wall Street Journal reported Thursday.

"It was the honor of my life to serve in the U.S. Navy, and I deeply regret and am embarrassed that my actions led to my administrative discharge," the younger Biden said in a statement released by his attorney.

"I respect the Navy's decision," Biden said. "With the love and support of my family, I'm moving forward."

Hunter Biden in 2008(Photo: Suchat Pederson, The News Journal)

The Wall Street Journal first reported on Biden's cocaine test, citing "people familiar with the matter."

Biden, a lawyer, is now a managing partner in an investment firm.

Navy spokesman Ryan Perry said Biden became a reserve officer through the Direct Commission Officer program in 2012.

"In May 2013, he was assigned to the Navy Reserve unit for Navy Public Affairs Support Element East in Norfolk, Va.," Perry said. "Ens. Biden was discharged from the Navy Reserve in February 2014. Like other junior officers, the details of Ens. Biden's discharge are not releasable under the Privacy Act."

BIDEN'S SON DISCHARGED FROM NAVY AFTER POSITIVE COCAINE TEST (WP)

By Katie Zezima And Missy Ryan

Washington Post, October 16, 2014

Vice President Joe Biden's son Hunter was discharged from the Navy Reserve after testing positive for cocaine, a source familiar with the matter confirmed Thursday.

The source spoke anonymously because no permission had been given to speak publicly about a personnel issue.

The Wall Street Journal reported Thursday that Biden was discharged earlier this year after failing a drug test in June 2013. A lawyer and former lobbyist, Biden was commissioned as an ensign in the Navy Reserve in 2013. He applied for a commission into the reserve as a public affairs officer at age 42. Because of his age, Biden needed a waiver to apply. The Journal reported he needed a second waiver because of a drug-related charge when he was younger, a request that is not unusual.

"It was the honor of my life to serve in the US Navy, and I deeply regret and am embarrassed that my actions led to my administrative discharge," Hunter Biden said in a statement. "I respect the Navy's decision. With the love and support of my family, I'm moving forward."

Vice President Biden's office declined to comment.

The Navy declined to confirm that Biden tested positive for cocaine use. Commander Ryan Perry, a Navy spokesman, said in a statement that Biden had been selected for his commission in 2012, and discharged in February 2014. "Like other junior officers, the details of Ens. Biden's discharge are not releasable under the Privacy Act," he said.

Hunter Biden was one of seven applicants accepted in 2012 for a direct commission, which allows professionals to join the Navy only by applying and attending a training course. The applicants must complete medical screenings and a security clearance. They are then sent to a 12-day program in Rhode Island that "prepares degreed and often highly experienced professionals to assume Navy Reserve Duty leadership positions in any of a broad range of critical career focus areas" including law and engineering.

"This year, I'm looking forward to standing with our son, Hunter, when he is commissioned as an ensign in the United States Navy," Jill Biden said in 2012. "He follows in the footsteps of two of his grandfathers, who have also served in the Navy."

Hunter Biden made news earlier this year when it was announced that he would join the board of Burisma Holdings, Ukraine's largest private gas firm. The announcement came shortly after Russia annexed Crimea, while Vice President Biden was engaged in diplomatic talks with the country. At the time, Vice President Biden's office stressed that his son was a private citizen.

"The vice president does not endorse any particular company and has no involvement with this company," Kendra Barkoff, a spokeswoman for Vice President Biden, said at the time. Hunter Biden is the younger of the vice president's two sons. His other son, Beau, is the attorney general of Delaware and is running for governor. Beau Biden is a major in the Delaware National Guard.

HUNTER BIDEN DISCHARGED FROM NAVY RESERVE FOR POSITIVE COCAINE TEST (WT)

By Douglas Ernst

Washington Times, October 17, 2014

Hunter Biden has been discharged by the Navy Reserve after testing positive for cocaine use. The military career of Vice President Joseph R. Biden's son ended earlier this year after only having been commissioned as an ensign on May 7, 2013, The Wall Street Journal reported Thursday. Mr. Biden had been assigned to Navy Public Affairs Support Element East in Norfolk, Virginia.

Mr. Biden, who now works for the Ukrainian energy company Burisma Holdings Ltd., said in a statement that it was "the honor of my life to serve in the U.S. Navy, and I deeply regret and am embarrassed that my actions led to my administrative discharge. I respect the Navy's decision. With the love and support of my family, I'm moving forward," The Journal reported. He also serves as a managing partner the investment company Rosemont Seneca Partners.

The vice president's office declined to comment for the paper's story.

It is not known what kind of discharge Mr. Biden was given, although a failed drug test would eliminate the possibility of receiving an "honorable" discharge. The most likely outcome for him would have been "other than honorable" or "general" discharge, the Journal reported.

BIDEN'S SON DISCHARGED FROM NAVY OVER DRUG USE (AP)

Associated Press, October 17, 2014

WASHINGTON - Hunter Biden, the youngest son of Vice President Joe Biden, has been kicked out of the military after testing positive for cocaine, two people familiar with the matter said Thursday.

Biden, a former lobbyist who works at an investment firm, was discharged from the Navy Reserve in February, the Navy said in a statement. The service did not give a reason for Biden's discharge barely a year after he was selected for the part-time position as a public affairs officer in the Navy Reserve.

In a statement released by his attorney, Biden did not give a reason for his discharge. He said he respected the Navy's decision and was moving forward with his family's support.

"It was the honor of my life to serve in the U.S. Navy, and I deeply regret and am embarrassed that my actions led to my administrative discharge," he said.

The vice president's office declined to comment.

Biden's attorney didn't respond to inquiries about whether Biden had used cocaine. But two people familiar with the matter said Biden was discharged after he failed a drug test last year. They weren't authorized to discuss the incident and requested anonymity.

The Wall Street Journal first reported Biden's discharge and failed drug test.

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BIDEN'S SON DISCHARGED FROM U.S. NAVY RESERVE AFTER DRUG TEST: SOURCES (REU)

By Andrea Shalal

Reuters, October 17, 2014

Full-text stories from Reuters currently cannot be included in this document. You may, however, click the link above to access the story.

REPORT: JOE BIDEN SON FAILED NAVY DRUG TEST (POLITICO)

By Nick Gass

Politico, October 17, 2014

The Navy Reserve discharged Vice President Joe Biden's son Hunter earlier this year after he tested positive for cocaine, according to a Wall Street Journal report posted Thursday. According to the report, Hunter Biden, 44, failed a drug test in June 2013 before his discharge in February. Biden, who needed a waiver to join the Navy at 43, reportedly needed another waiver because of a drug-related issue at an earlier age.

Biden, who held a part-time position as a public affairs ensign, expressed deep regret and embarrassment for his actions. He currently works as managing partner of an investment company.

"I respect the Navy's decision. With the love and support of my family, I'm moving forward," he said in a statement.

The vice president's office declined comment to The Wall Street Journal. It's not clear whether Biden received an honorable discharge.

REPORT: BIDEN'S SON DISCHARGED FROM NAVY AFTER FAILING COCAINE TEST (HILL)

By Peter Sullivan

The Hill, October 17, 2014

Hunter Biden, the son of Vice President Biden, was discharged from the Navy Reserve this year after testing positive for cocaine, The Wall Street Journal reports.

The paper reports that after joining the Navy as an ensign in 2013, he reported for duty in Norfolk, Va. He was drug tested in June 2013 and the test was positive for cocaine, according to the paper's sources.

Hunter Biden was discharged in February of this year.

"It was the honor of my life to serve in the US Navy, and I deeply regret and am embarrassed that my actions led to my administrative discharge," said Biden in a statement. "I respect the Navy's decision.

"With the love and support of my family, I'm moving forward," he added.

Hunter Biden is now managing director at Rosemont Seneca Technology Partners.

His brother, Delaware Attorney General Beau Biden also has a military record, serving in his state's National Guard. Beau Biden was also deployed to Iraq while in the guard.

-This story was updated at 7:28 p.m.

BIDEN'S SON DISCHARGED FROM NAVY AFTER TESTING POSITIVE FOR COCAINE (CNN)

By Eric Bradner

CNN, October 16, 2014

Washington (CNN) - The Navy Reserve discharged Vice President Joe Biden's son Hunter this year after he tested positive for cocaine, U.S. officials confirmed.

The discharge of Biden, a 44-year-old lawyer and managing partner at an investment firm, was first reported by the Wall Street Journal on Thursday. He confirmed the report in a statement to CNN.

"It was the honor of my life to serve in the U.S. Navy, and I deeply regret and am embarrassed that my actions led to my administrative discharge. I respect the Navy's decision. With the love and support of my family, I'm moving forward," he said.

Biden was commissioned as an ensign in May 2013 and assigned as a public affairs officer in a Norfolk, Virginia-based reserve unit. A month later, he tested positive for cocaine, and he was discharged in February, according to the report.

The U.S. official said the Navy never had contact with the vice president's office over the issue, and that standard procedure for failed drug tests is administrative discharge. The vice president's office didn't comment on the report.

Hunter Biden is the younger of Biden's two sons. His older brother, Beau Biden, is Delaware's attorney general and a major in the Delaware Army National Guard. He was deployed for a year in Iraq.

CNN's Barbara Starr and Jim Acosta contributed to this report.

BIDEN'S SON DISCHARGED FROM NAVY AFTER REPORTEDLY TESTING POSITIVE FOR COCAINE (FOX)

By Ed Henry

Fox News, October 16, 2014

The son of Vice President Joe Biden says he is "embarrassed" after being discharged from the Navy Reserve earlier this year --- reportedly after testing positive for cocaine.

The Wall Street Journal, citing people familiar with the matter, reported Thursday that Hunter Biden's short-lived military career ended because he failed a drug test after reporting to his unit in 2013. According to the Wall Street Journal, the Navy discharged him in February of this year. Biden said in a statement to Fox News that he respects the Navy's decision but did not specify why he was discharged.

"It was the honor of my life to serve in the U.S. Navy, and I deeply regret and am embarrassed that my actions led to my administrative discharge," he said. "I respect the Navy's decision. With the love and support of my family, I'm moving forward."

Biden, 44, made the decision to join the military late in life. According to the Wall Street Journal, Biden was commissioned as an ensign in the Navy Reserve in 2013 after deciding the previous year to join the service as a public affairs officer.

However, Biden was given a drug test after reporting to his unit at Navy Public Affairs Support Element East in Norfolk, Va. and tested positive for cocaine, the Wall Street Journal reported.

According to the paper, the Navy would not specify what sort of discharge he was given.

Vice President Biden spoke about his son's decision to join the Navy late in life at the American Legion's Salute to Heroes Inaugural Ball in 2013, joking that his son's decision was a result of poor judgment.

"We have a lot of bad judgment in my family," Biden said. "My son over 40 just joined the Navy to be sworn in."

Hunter Biden is a lawyer who serves as a managing partner for a Rosemont Seneca Partners, an investment firm. He made headlines earlier this year when he was hired to be a director and lawyer for a Ukraine company promoting energy independence from Moscow.

The move raised eyebrows, as Vice President Biden and others in the Obama administration have attempted to influence energy policies and other issues of the Ukrainian government as it battles Russia and pro-Russian separatists to control the country.

The vice president's spokeswoman, Kendra Barkoff, has said that Biden's son is a private citizen and a lawyer, and that Joe Biden "does not endorse any particular company and has no involvement with this company."

Fox News' Ed Henry contributed to this report.

BIDEN'S SON, HUNTER, DISCHARGED FROM NAVY OVER FAILED COCAINE TEST : THE TWO-WAY : NPR (NPR)

By Eyder Peralta

NPR, October 16, 2014

Vice President Joe Biden's son, Hunter, has been discharged from the Navy after testing positive for cocaine, The Wall Street Journal reported on Thursday.

Citing "people familiar with the matter," the paper reports:

"Hunter Biden, a lawyer by training who is now a managing partner at an investment company, had been commissioned as an ensign in the Navy Reserve, a part-time position. But after failing a drug test last year, his brief military career ended.

"Mr. Biden, 44 years old, decided to pursue military service relatively late, beginning the direct-commission process to become a public-affairs officer in the Navy Reserve in 2012. Because of his age-43 when he was to be commissioned-he needed a waiver to join the Navy. He received a second Navy waiver because of a drug-related incident when he was a young man, according to people familiar with the matter. Military officials say such drug waivers aren't uncommon."

In a statement issued by Hunter Biden in response to the Wall Street Journal story, he says that serving in the Navy was the honor of his life.

"I deeply regret and am embarrassed that my actions led to my administrative discharge," he said.

"I respect the Navy's decision. With the love and support of my family, I'm moving forward."

ABC News, citing "a person familiar with the case," reports that Hunter Biden was discharged from the Navy in February after failing a urinalysis test.

The network adds:

"Separately, a Navy spokesman confirmed that Biden had been discharged from the Navy, but because of Privacy Act restrictions could not detail why he had been discharged.

"'Ensign Hunter Biden was selected for commission through the Direct Commission Officer Program in 2012,' Cmd. Ryan Perry said. 'In May, 2013 he was assigned to the Navy Public Supports Element East in Norfolk, Virginia. He was discharged from the Navy Reserve in February, 2014. Like other junior officers, the details of Ensign Biden's discharge are not releasable under the Privacy Act.'"

JOE BIDEN'S SON HUNTER KICKED OUT OF NAVY FOR COCAINE (NBCNEWS)

By Jim Miklaszewski and Courtney Kube

NBC News, October 17, 2014

Vice President Joe Biden's son was booted from the Navy Reserve earlier because he tested positive for drugs, it was revealed on Thursday.

A U.S. official told NBC News that Hunter Biden was kicked out of the Reserve earlier this year after he failed a drug test.

The official said Biden failed the test in 2013, but he was not kicked out until Feb. 14 of this year. Senior U.S. officials told NBC News that Biden, 44, tested positive for cocaine. The Wall Street Journal first reported the incident.

According to one official, Biden's dismissal from the Naval Reserves was not made public "because he was treated like any other sailor who fails a drug test and is thrown out of the Navy."

The official said the services do not routinely report such cases.

Hunter Biden, who is married with three kids, issued a statement Thursday evening through his lawyer, saying: "It was the honor of my life to serve in the US Navy, and I deeply regret and am embarrassed that my actions led to my administrative discharge. I respect the Navy's decision. With the love and support of my family, I'm moving forward."

Biden was commissioned in the Navy Reserves in 2012 as an Ensign and was pursuing a public affairs track. He had to get a waiver because of his age at the time of his commissioning.

HUNTER BIDEN DISCHARGED FROM NAVY RESERVE OVER COCAINE (MSNBC)

By Rachel Kleinman

MSNBC, October 17, 2014

Hunter Biden - the 44-year-old son of Vice President Joe Biden - was discharged from the Navy Reserve earlier this year upon failing a drug test in 2013, a U.S. official confirmed to NBC News. Biden was commissioned by the Navy in 2012 as an Ensign.

It was the honor of my life to serve in the U.S. Navy, and I deeply regret and am embarrassed that my actions led to my administrative discharge," Biden said in a statement. "I respect the Navy's decision. With the love and support of my family, I'm moving forward."

Hunter Biden tested positive for cocaine during a drill weekend in mid-2013, a U.S. official told NBC News.

Andrea Mitchell Reports, 4/22/14, 1:18 PM ET Hunter Biden tries to live on \$1.50 a day

The "Live Below The Line" campaign hopes to bring attention to extreme poverty by challenging people to live a budget of \$1.50 a day for up to five days. Hunter Biden and Rick Leach, President and CEO of World Food program USA, discuss. Hunter Biden is Vice President Joe Biden's second son, and stepson to Joe Biden's wife Jill Biden. He is a licensed attorney and managing partner at Rosemont Seneca Partners, LLC.

Joe Biden's oldest son Beau Biden is the attorney general of Delaware and currently considered a front-runner in the 2016 race for governor of the Diamond State. A recent University of Delaware poll shows 60% of respondents view Beau Biden favorably.

JOE BIDEN'S SON HUNTER BIDEN DISCHARGED FROM NAVY AFTER POSITIVE COCAINE TEST (ABCOTUS)

By Luis Martinez and Arlette Saenz

ABC Otus News, October 17, 2014

Vice President Joe Biden's son Hunter Biden was discharged from the Navy in February after testing positive for cocaine, a person familiar with the case confirmed to ABC News.

The person said Biden had failed a urinalysis test administered in June 2013 before he was

discharged from the Navy.

"It was the honor of my life to serve in the U.S. Navy, and I deeply regret and am embarrassed that my actions led to my administrative discharge," Hunter Biden said in a statement distributed through his lawyer. "I respect the Navy's decision. With the love and support of my family, I'm moving forward."

The person familiar with the case said he "was treated no different than any other sailor."

Biden, 44, had needed an age waiver to join the Reserves because of his age as well as a second waiver because of a drug-related incident while a young man.

Separately, a Navy spokesman confirmed that Biden had been discharged from the Navy, but because of Privacy Act restrictions could not detail why he had been discharged.

"Ensign Hunter Biden was selected for commission through the Direct Commission Officer Program in 2012," Cmdr. Ryan Perry said. "In May, 2013 he was assigned to the Navy Public Supports Element East in Norfolk, Virginia. He was discharged from the Navy Reserve in February, 2014. Like other junior officers, the details of Ensign Biden's discharge are not releasable under the Privacy Act."

News of Hunter Biden's discharge was first reported by the Wall Street Journal.

FAILED DRUG TEST LEADS TO DISCHARGE OF BIDEN'S SON (WILNJ)

By William H. McMichael and Jonathan Starkey

Wilmington (DE) News Journal, October 16, 2014

Hunter Biden, the younger son of Vice President Joe Biden, failed a drug test for cocaine a month after his commissioning into the Navy Reserve and was discharged, The Wall Street Journal reported late Thursday.

"It was the honor of my life to serve in the U.S. Navy, and I deeply regret and am embarrassed that my actions led to my administrative discharge," Biden said in statement issued through his lawyer. "I respect the Navy's decision. With the love and support of my family, I'm moving forward." A spokeswoman for the vice president declined to comment.

Biden, an ensign, was selected for commission as a reserve officer through the Direct Commission Officer program in 2012, according to Cmdr. Ryan Perry, a Navy spokesman.

In May 2013, Biden, 43 was commissioned into the Navy Reserve unit for Navy Public Affairs Support Element East in Norfolk, Virginia. Biden, who had no prior military experience, was one of six officers commissioned nationally into the public affairs division of the Navy Reserve.

The Wall Street Journal, citing "people familiar with the matter" reported that Biden was given a drug test in June 2013 that tested positive for cocaine.

The brother of Delaware Attorney General Beau Biden, Hunter Biden - who has worked as a lawyer, lobbyist and managing partner at the investment firm Rosemont Seneca Partners in Washington - was discharged from the Navy Reserve in February.

Perry would provide no other details. "Like other junior officers, the details of Ensign Biden's discharge are not releasable under the Privacy Act," he said.

Asked whether Biden's commissioning had anything to do with his father's high position in the government, Perry succinctly told The News Journal, "No, it didn't."

"All candidates were considered based on the merits of their application and Mr. Biden met the qualifications for commission," Perry said.

Applicants to the direct commissioning program for the Public Affairs Reserve must hold a baccalaureate degree or higher from an accredited institution, preferably in the fields of communication, English, Journalism, broadcasting, public relations, rhetoric/speech, marketing, international studies or public administration. Applicants may not have passed their 42nd birthday at time of commissioning or an age waiver is required. The board meets twice annually and, on average, approximately 35 people apply, Ryan said.

Biden sought and received a waiver to join the service because of his age.

The Wall Street Journal reported Thursday that Biden received a second waiver because of a "drug-related incident when he was a young man." The report added that such waivers are not uncommon.

The vice president joked in January 2013 about Hunter's decision to join the military late in life during a speech at the American Legion's Salute to Heroes Inaugural Ball, which honors Medal of Honor recipients.

"We have a lot of bad judgment in my family. "My son, who is over 40, just joined the United States Navy. He's about to be sworn in as an officer," Biden said.

But Hunter joining the military was a source of pride for the Bidens, and military service runs in the family.

Beau Biden is a major in the Delaware Army National Guard and served in Iraq from October 2008 to September 2009.

Jill Biden talked about Hunter joining the Navy during a November 2012 event with Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus

"I'm looking forward to standing with our son, Hunter, when he is commissioned as an ensign in the United States Navy," Jill Biden said at the time, according to a Navy transcript. "He follows in the footsteps of two of his grandfathers, who have also served in the Navy."

Contact Jonathan Starkey at jstarkey@delawareonline.com. Contact William H. McMichael at bmc michael@delawareonline.com.

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COCAINE BUSTED: BIDEN'S SON BOOTED FROM THE NAVY AFTER ONE RESERVE-DUTY WEEKEND (EXAMINER)

By Timothy Whiteman

Examiner, October 17, 2014

After a singular weekend Reservist drill with the U.S. Navy, Vice President Joe Biden's youngest son has been kicked out of the Armed Forces for cocaine use. As reported by the Wall Street Journal on Oct. 16, 2014, the now ex-Ensign Hunter Biden sunk his naval career literally on his first day of duty.

Deemed an Officer and a Gentleman by an act of Congress, Biden was commissioned an Ensign on May 7, 2013 in the Navy Reserve. Assigned to the Navy Public Affairs Support Element East reserve command, then Ensign Biden reported for duty to his unit one short month later for his first ever weekend reserve drill at the sprawling Naval Station in Norfolk, Virginia. Upon arrival, he was promptly given a drug test, which just as promptly, came back with a positive result for cocaine use. After months of working its way through the bureaucracy, Biden was finally released from the Navy last February, sans Honorable Discharge.

The youngest of the Biden sons waited somewhat late in life to pursue a military career at the age of 43, albeit that of the Naval Reserve component vice active duty. Seeking one of the very rare Direct Commission Officer (DCO) slots available every year, the former Ensign Biden managed to secure one of the six seats open for Public Affairs Officers.

With the official cut off that of no older than 35, Biden somehow managed to be granted an age waiver by the Navy Department. Yet the over-age waiver was only the first. Reportedly, he also managed to secure a second waiver for a prior drug-related incident in his past.

DCOs aren't required to attend any of the Service Academies nor any of the standard and usually rigorous Officer Commissioning Programs offered at most major universities and colleges. Biden's formal training prior to his commissioning was what the Old Salts in the Navy refer to as The Knife and Fork School. The two week long seminar located at the Naval Station, Newport, Rhode Island consists of "academic instruction, military training, and physical conditioning. 90+ hours of lessons include: Leadership and Management, Programs and Policies, Military Customs, Traditions, and regulations, naval history, Naval Warfare, and Fitness and Wellness Programs" as cited in the Navy's official website

While there's been no official comment from the Office of the Vice President, former Ensign Biden is somehow managing to move in with his life. While it hasn't been released if he's received a General Discharge or an Other than Honorable, the ex-Ensign said in a statement that it was "the honor of my life to serve in the U.S. Navy, and I deeply regret and am embarrassed that my actions led to my administrative discharge. I respect the Navy's decision. With the love and support of my family, I'm moving forward."

While his being bounced from the Navy may be a professional embarrassment, it certainly won't effect him financially. Biden is currently a partner at Rosemont Seneca Partners, LLC and is Counsel to the a New York based-law firm of Boies, Schiller, Flexner, LLP. Additionally, he was the center of controversy when he was appointed to the board of the Ukrainian Energy Company Burisma Holdings, which is part of the vast business empire of Ihor Kolomoisky, who himself has

been looked upon for rather shady financial dealings in Eastern Europe.

VICE PRESIDENT BIDEN'S YOUNGEST SON DISCHARGED FROM NAVY RESERVES AFTER TESTING POSITIVE FOR COCAINE: REPORT (NYDN)

By DAN FRIEDMAN

New York Daily News, October 17, 2014

WASHINGTON - Vice President Biden's youngest son was discharged from the Navy Reserves this year after testing positive for cocaine, according to a report Thursday.

Hunter Biden, 44, a lawyer who works for an investment company, failed the drug test after he reported to a Norfolk, Va., reserve unit last year, the Wall Street Journal reported.

It was "the honor of my life to serve in the U.S. Navy, and I deeply regret and am embarrassed that my actions led to my administrative discharge," Hunter Biden said in a statement.

"I respect the Navy's decision. With the love and support of my family, I'm moving forward."

Biden joined the reserve officer program in 2012. He was commissioned as an ensign in 2013 and assigned to a public affairs unit in Norfolk.

After reporting to the unit in June 2013, Biden was given a urinalysis drug test, and he failed it. He was discharged in February 2014.

The vice president's son "was treated no different than any other sailor," a person familiar with the matter told ABC News.

The Navy confirmed Biden was discharged but declined to comment on the reason for the discharge because of Privacy Act restrictions.

Navy personnel who are discharged because of a failed drug test are not given honorable discharges. Most receive an "other than honorable" or "general" discharge.

It isn't clear which discharge Biden received, the Journal reported.

In joining the Navy Reserves, Biden needed one waiver because of his age and a second waiver because of a drug-related incident when he was younger.

A spokeswoman for Vice President Biden, who is widely believed to be considering a 2016 presidential bid, declined to comment.

The veep has publicly cited Hunter Biden's Navy position, telling an American Legion gathering in 2013, "My son, who is over 40, just joined the United States Navy. He's about to be sworn in as an officer, Hunter Biden."

Hunter Biden, who is married with three children, graduated from Georgetown University and Yale Law School, and serves as managing partner at Rosemont Seneca Partners in Washington, D.C.

In May, he joined the board of Ukraine's largest private gas firm.

The vice president's older son, Delaware Attorney General Beau Biden, is expected to run for governor.

Joe Biden and his wife Jill have a daughter, Ashley, who joined the Delaware Center for Justice in 2012 as associate executive director.

A member of the extended Biden clan, the vice president's niece Caroline Biden, was nabbed last year in Manhattan for assaulting a cop and refusing arrest after a dispute with a roommate over rent. Because the officer was not hurt, prosecutors earlier this year agreed to dismiss the charges and seal her record if she stayed out of trouble for six months.

HUNTER BIDEN KICKED OUT OF THE NAVY FOR FAILING COCAINE TEST (NYPOST)

New York Post, October 17, 2014

WASHINGTON-Vice President Joe Biden's son Hunter was discharged from the Navy Reserve this year after testing positive for cocaine, according to people familiar with the matter.

Hunter Biden, a lawyer by training who is now a managing partner at an investment company, had been commissioned as an ensign in the Navy Reserve, a part-time position. But after failing a drug test last year, his brief military career ended.

Biden, 44 years old, decided to pursue military service relatively late, beginning the direct-commission process to become a public-affairs officer in the Navy Reserve in 2012. Because of his age-43 when he was to be commissioned-he needed a waiver to join the Navy. He received a second Navy waiver because of a drug-related incident when he was a young man, according to people familiar with the matter. Military officials say such drug waivers aren't uncommon.

Biden was commissioned as an ensign on May 7, 2013, and assigned to Navy Public Affairs

Support Element East in Norfolk, Va., a reserve unit, according to the Navy. In June 2013, after reporting to his unit in Norfolk, he was given a drug test, which turned up positive for cocaine, according to people familiar with the situation. Biden was discharged in February, the Navy said. Biden said in a statement that it was "the honor of my life to serve in the U.S. Navy, and I deeply regret and am embarrassed that my actions led to my administrative discharge. I respect the Navy's decision. With the love and support of my family, I'm moving forward." This article originally appeared on Marketwatch.

VP BIDEN'S SON KICKED OUT OF NAVY RESERVE (BOSH)

By O'Ryan Johnson

Boston Herald, October 17, 2014

The youngest son of Vice President Joe Biden was kicked out of the Navy Reserve after testing positive for cocaine, two people familiar with the matter said yesterday.

Hunter Biden, 44, was discharged from the Navy Reserve in February, the Navy said in a statement. The Navy did not give a reason for the discharge.

Biden's attorney didn't respond to inquiries about whether Biden had used cocaine. But two people familiar with the matter said Biden was discharged after he failed a drug test last year. They weren't authorized to discuss the incident and requested anonymity.

Hunter Biden released a statement saying he was honored "to serve in the Navy and he was "embarrassed" by his actions.

"It was the honor of my life to serve in the U.S. Navy, and I deeply regret and am embarrassed that my actions led to my administrative discharge," Hunter Biden said in a statement. "I respect the Navy's decision. With the love and support of my family, I'm moving forward."

The vice president's office declined to comment.

Biden, a former lobbyist who works at an investment firm, was discharged barely a year after he was selected for the part-time position as a public affairs officer in the Navy Reserve.

His brother, Beau, is the attorney general of Delaware and is a major in the state's Army National Guard.

HUNTER BIDEN DISCHARGED FROM NAVY (BIZINDER)

By Paul Szoldra

Business Insider, October 17, 2014

Vice President Joe Biden's son Hunter was kicked out of the Navy Reserve this year after he tested positive for cocaine, The Wall Street Journal reported Thursday.

A Yale-educated lawyer, the 44-year-old Hunter Biden was commissioned as a Navy ensign May 7, 2013 and assigned as a public affairs officer at a reserve unit in Norfolk, Va., the Journal reported. But just a month later when he checked into his new unit and was given a drug test, he popped for cocaine.

He was discharged in February of this year.

In a statement, Biden said it was "the honor of my life to serve in the U.S. Navy, and I deeply regret and am embarrassed that my actions led to my administrative discharge. I respect the Navy's decision. With the love and support of my family, I'm moving forward."

It was not clear what type of discharge he received. Military personnel discharged for drug usage usually do not receive honorable discharges, although Biden's statement says he received an "administrative discharge."

The Navy did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

CNN has more:

The U.S. official said the Navy never had contact with the vice president's office over the issue, and that standard procedure for failed drug tests is administrative discharge. The vice president's office didn't comment on the report.

In a speech given at the commissioning of the USS Delaware in 2012, Navy Secretary Ray Mabus noted that Hunter would be joining the service. His brother Beau also served in the military, as an attorney in the Army with a deployment to Iraq.

Biden's job in the Navy Reserve was only a part-time commitment. He has kept busy as head of the legal unit for Ukraine's largest private gas firm, according to The Washington Post. He also serves as managing partner at Rosemont Seneca Partners and is an adjunct professor at

Georgetown University.

TOP NEWS, LATEST HEADLINES, LATEST NEWS, WORLD NEWS & U.S NEWS (UPI)

UPI, October 16, 2014

WASHINGTON, Oct. 16 (UPI) -

Hunter Biden was discharged from the Navy this year for cocaine.

The 44-year-old son of Vice President Joe Biden was kicked out of the Navy Reserve after failing a drug test for cocaine, sources confirmed to The Wall Street Journal

Thursday. Biden commissioned as an ensign in May 2013, tested positive for cocaine in June 2013 and was subsequently discharged in February.

"It was the honor of my life to serve in the U.S. Navy, and I deeply regret and am embarrassed that my actions led to my administrative discharge," Biden said in a statement. "I respect the Navy's decision. With the love and support of my family, I'm moving forward."

Biden attended Yale Law School, and was a founding partner of Washington D.C.-based law firm Oldaker, Biden, and Belair, LLP. He is currently serves as chairman of World Food Program USA, and was appointed

to the board of directors at Bursima Holdings in May.

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NEW YORK TIMES AND WASHINGTON POST OP-EDS:

KEEPING EBOLA AT BAY (NYT)

New York Times, October 17, 2014

The Ebola cases in the United States show that American hospitals and public health officials have much to learn about effective ways to protect health care workers and the public from possible infection.

Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital, the first hospital put to the test, failed to protect two nurses, who had cared for the Ebola victim Thomas Eric Duncan, from becoming infected. Perhaps more alarming are the stumbles by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the lead federal agency for fighting infectious diseases.

One of the nurses, who was monitoring her own temperature, called the C.D.C. and was allowed to take a commercial flight from Cleveland to Dallas-Fort Worth even though she had a slight fever, which did not violate current guidelines. That was an incredible lapse in judgment by the C.D.C.

Health officials and the flight's airline are now scrambling to notify passengers, crew members and janitors who cleaned the planes she traveled on of possible exposure. While the danger to those people appears slight, this incident shows that the C.D.C. needs to lower the fever threshold in its guidance and advise against any travel on public forms of transportation for 21 days by people who have potentially been exposed to the virus.

There is more the agency ought to do. It should be increasing the rigor of its guidelines on protective clothing for health care workers, hospital readiness, and training on the handling of Ebola cases. President Obama said on Thursday evening that he is considering appointing an "Ebola czar" to manage the government's response.

The C.D.C.'s inadequate advice to hospitals on how to protect health care workers may have contributed to the latest cases. An expert who oversaw the treatment of two American missionaries flown from West Africa to Atlanta for treatment at Emory University Hospital told The Times that he had warned the C.D.C. repeatedly that its guidelines were irresponsibly lax. The guidelines allowed protective garments that left the neck and other areas exposed. It was not until Tuesday night that the agency - essentially acknowledging its error - issued new, stricter guidelines requiring full-body suits covering the head and neck, as well as close supervision of the risky process of taking off protective gear.

Unless the C.D.C. can help hospitals prepare properly, every new case will result in improvised responses that may not work. The hospital in Dallas has sent one of the nurses to Emory and the other to the National Institutes of Health, two of the nation's four specially designated high-containment hospitals. But there are only a limited number of beds in these institutions (N.I.H. has

only two such beds), so other major medical centers must be ready to accept cases if necessary. Some hospitals in cities with large West African populations are taking steps to train their staffs. While the chance that an infected patient will show up at any particular hospital or clinic is very small, health workers should still know the basics of what to do if a patient arrives at their door. National Nurses United, the country's largest union of nurses, says there has been almost no hands-on training, just easy-to-ignore guidance documents.

The advice now from the C.D.C. is for emergency room staff to take travel histories, isolate patients who have fevers and have been in West Africa, and call the C.D.C. if Ebola is suspected. Once a case is diagnosed as Ebola, the C.D.C. will fly in a swat team of experts within hours to oversee treatment.

At a congressional hearing on Thursday, House members asked whether the United States was adequately protected against people who might have been infected in West Africa but did not yet have symptoms. The current system relies on screening before they are allowed to fly out of West Africa and again when they reach airports in this country. So far, only one infected patient - the man who was treated in Dallas and later died - escaped detection at the airports since the epidemic was first identified seven months ago. There should be some comfort in knowing that that part of the system is working.

Even so, some members of Congress, mostly Republicans, have called for barring entry to all people who have been in the Ebola-stricken countries as a way to keep the virus out.

The danger is that if other nations followed an American ban with bans of their own, economies in West Africa would be crippled. That could only reduce the ability of those nations to fight the epidemic, and make it even more likely the disease would spread through porous borders to other African nations and beyond.

EVO MORALES OF BOLIVIA AND DEMOCRACY (NYT)

New York Times, October 17, 2014

Evo Morales, Bolivia's populist president, dedicated his landslide re-election victory on Sunday night to the late Venezuelan leader, Hugo Chávez. Mr. Chávez's brand of socialist policies and anti-American bombast have found strong resonance in much of the continent, most significantly in Ecuador and Bolivia.

Most Latin American nations hold regular, credible elections, although the strength of democratic values in the region has been undermined in past years by coups and electoral irregularities. But perhaps the most disquieting trend is that protégés of Mr. Chávez seem inclined to emulate his reluctance to cede power.

If Mr. Morales, who was first elected in 2006, serves out his term and leaves office in 2020, he will be the country's longest-serving president. With strong popular support and allies in Congress, he could well try to stay in power even longer by amending the constitution or calling for a referendum. (He recently said in an interview that he was not inclined to stay beyond 2020, but his remarks were far from categorical.)

In Ecuador, President Rafael Correa is seeking legislative action that would allow all elected officials to run for an indefinite number of terms. Diplomats and analysts say some Central American leaders are likely to follow suit.

Colombia managed to resist this trend near the end of former President Álvaro Uribe's second term in office in 2010. Having amended the Constitution once in 2006 to secure a second term, Mr. Uribe's supporters in Congress tried to keep him in office for a third. They were stopped by a sound ruling of the country's Constitutional Court.

It is easy to see why many Bolivians would want to see Mr. Morales, the country's first president with indigenous roots, remain at the helm. During his tenure, the economy of the country, one of the least developed in the hemisphere, grew at a healthy rate, the level of inequality shrank and the number of people living in poverty dropped significantly. He has also given the Andean nation, with its history of political turmoil, a long stretch of relative stability.

But the pattern of prolonged terms in power is unhealthy for the region. It is disquieting that the stronger democracies in Latin America seem happy to condone it. To varying degrees, Latin America's entrenched rulers have weakened institutions and asserted greater control over the press. Staying in office for several terms enables leaders to appoint allies to electoral and judicial bodies and to build patronage networks that turn out the vote.

The starkest, and most alarming, example, is President Nicolás Maduro of Venezuela, Mr. Chávez's handpicked successor, who has turned his country into an autocratic, despotic state. This regional dynamic has been dismal for Washington's influence in the region. In Venezuela, Bolivia and Ecuador, the new generation of caudillos have staked out anti-American policies and limited the scope of engagement on development, military cooperation and drug enforcement efforts. This has damaged the prospects for trade and security cooperation. Mr. Morales could keep Bolivia on a positive trajectory by continuing to invest in social welfare programs and infrastructure. His legacy would be stronger if he, or lawmakers, decided that this new term would be his last.

WHY NORTH CAROLINA'S SENATE RACE HAS A WIDE GENDER GAP (NYT)

By David Firestone

New York Times, October 17, 2014

CHARLOTTE, N.C. - There are two Southern women running for re-election to the Senate this year, both of them Democrats, and the difference in their approach to social issues says everything about the temper of their states.

In Louisiana, a deeply conservative state with a large Catholic population, Mary Landrieu has taken what she calls "nuanced" positions on abortion and same-sex marriage, essentially trying to have it both ways. She says life begins at conception, but the government should stay out of the bedroom and doctor's office, except if it wants to ban late-term abortions.

She says she supports same-sex marriage, but also supports the Louisiana constitutional amendment banning it. It's no wonder she would rather spend her time extolling fossil fuels. But on Wednesday in Charlotte, Kay Hagan stood without hesitation next to Janet Colm, chief executive of the Planned Parenthood Action Fund of Central North Carolina, and proudly bashed her opponent, Thom Tillis, for reducing women's rights on abortion and birth control.

"It is 2014, and these decisions should be between a woman and her doctor, not between a woman and her boss, nor her senator," she said at a news conference here, surrounded by cheering female supporters. "And let me tell you, after seeing what Thom Tillis has done in Raleigh, I am so glad that no legislator in Raleigh is my doctor."

Ms. Hagan needs women to show up at the polls on Nov. 4, maybe more so than candidates in other races. She has been running even or a few points ahead of Mr. Tillis in a swing state that is better educated and more urbanized than Louisiana, and some polls have given her an advantage of as much as 20 percent over Mr. Tillis among women, the biggest gender gap in any Senate race.

Under the circumstances, she couldn't ask for a more perfect opponent, because Mr. Tillis - the speaker of the state House - has a long record of making life harder for women in North Carolina, particularly poor ones. He led Republicans in defunding Planned Parenthood, which provides preventive health services and birth control.

He added a series of abortion-clinic restrictions to a motorcycle-safety bill and pushed it into law. And he refused to expand Medicaid in the state, denying health insurance to 500,000 people, including 277,000 women.

He has said states have the right to ban contraceptives, supports a personhood amendment that would effectively ban abortion (though he favors an exception for rape, incest and health dangers), and has fought same-sex marriage in the state. He killed a bill mandating equal pay for women, saying existing laws were adequate. "Let's enforce the laws on the books," he said at a recent debate, "versus some of the campaign gimmicks that are going to put more regulations on businesses and make it more difficult."

More broadly, Mr. Tillis embodies the backward turn that North Carolina took when Republicans assumed control of state government last year and proceeded to dismantle years of progress on education, racial equality and ballot access.

The state's decline has dismayed even moderate voters, and is a big reason Ms. Hagan has not fallen behind in the race, despite President Obama's unpopularity in the state.

To stay ahead, she will need every woman's vote she can find. And even though she didn't say so on Wednesday, there's a lot at stake for men, too.

THE DARK MARKET FOR PERSONAL DATA (NYT)

By Frank Pasquale

New York Times, October 17, 2014

BALTIMORE - THE reputation business is exploding. Having eroded privacy for decades, shady, poorly regulated data miners, brokers and resellers have now taken creepy classification to a whole new level. They have created lists of victims of sexual assault, and lists of people with sexually transmitted diseases. Lists of people who have Alzheimer's, dementia and AIDS. Lists of the impotent and the depressed.

There are lists of "impulse buyers." Lists of suckers: gullible consumers who have shown that they are susceptible to "vulnerability-based marketing." And lists of those deemed commercially undesirable because they live in or near trailer parks or nursing homes. Not to mention lists of people who have been accused of wrongdoing, even if they were not charged or convicted. Typically sold at a few cents per name, the lists don't have to be particularly reliable to attract eager buyers - mostly marketers, but also, increasingly, financial institutions vetting customers to guard against fraud, and employers screening potential hires.

There are three problems with these lists. First, they are often inaccurate. For example, as The Washington Post reported, an Arkansas woman found her credit history and job prospects wrecked after she was mistakenly listed as a methamphetamine dealer. It took her years to clear her name and find a job.

Second, even when the information is accurate, many of the lists have no business being in the hands of retailers, bosses or banks. Having a medical condition, or having been a victim of a crime, is simply not relevant to most employment or credit decisions.

Third, people aren't told they are on these lists, so they have no opportunity to correct bad information. The Arkansas woman found out about the inaccurate report only when she was denied a job. She was one of the rare ones.

"Data-driven" hiring practices are under increasing scrutiny, because the data may be a proxy for race, class or disability. For example, in 2011, CVS settled a charge of disability discrimination after a job applicant challenged a personality test that probed mental health issues. But if an employer were to secretly use lists based on inferences about mental health, it would be nearly impossible for an affected applicant to find out what was going on. Secrecy is discrimination's best friend: Unknown unfairness can never be detected, let alone corrected.

These problems can't be solved with existing law. The Federal Trade Commission has strained to understand personal data markets - a \$156-billion-a-year industry - and it can't find out where the data brokers get their information, and whom they sell it to. Hiding behind a veil of trade secrecy, most refuse to divulge this vital information.

The market in personal information offers little incentive for accuracy; it matters little to list-buyers whether every entry is accurate - they need only a certain threshold percentage of "hits" to improve their targeting. But to individuals wrongly included on derogatory lists, the harm to their reputation is great.

The World Privacy Forum, a research and advocacy organization, estimates that there are about 4,000 data brokers. They range from giants like Acxiom, a publicly traded company that helps marketers target consumer segments, to boutiques like Paramount Lists, which has compiled lists of addicts and debtors. Companies like these vacuum up data from just about any source imaginable: consumer health websites, payday lenders, online surveys, warranty registrations, Internet sweepstakes, loyalty-card data from retailers, charities' donor lists, magazine subscription lists, and information from public records.

It's unrealistic to expect individuals to inquire, broker by broker, about their files. Instead, we need to require brokers to make targeted disclosures to consumers. Uncovering problems in Big Data (or decision models based on that data) should not be a burden we expect individuals to solve on their own.

Privacy protections in other areas of the law can and should be extended to cover consumer data. The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act, or Hipaa, obliges doctors and hospitals to give patients access to their records. The Fair Credit Reporting Act gives loan and job applicants, among others, a right to access, correct and annotate files maintained by credit reporting agencies.

It is time to modernize these laws by applying them to all companies that peddle sensitive personal information. If the laws cover only a narrow range of entities, they may as well be dead letters. For

example, protections in Hipaa don't govern the "health profiles" that are compiled and traded by data brokers, which can learn a great deal about our health even without access to medical records.

Congress should require data brokers to register with the Federal Trade Commission, and allow individuals to request immediate notification once they have been placed on lists that contain sensitive data. Reputable data brokers will want to respond to good-faith complaints, to make their lists more accurate. Plaintiffs' lawyers could use defamation law to hold recalcitrant firms accountable.

We need regulation to help consumers recognize the perils of the new information landscape without being overwhelmed with data. The right to be notified about the use of one's data and the right to challenge and correct errors is fundamental. Without these protections, we'll continue to be judged by a big-data Star Chamber of unaccountable decision makers using questionable sources. Frank Pasquale, a professor of law at the University of Maryland, is the author of the forthcoming book "The Black Box Society: The Secret Algorithms That Control Money and Information."

THE CASE FOR LOW IDEALS (NYT)

By David Brooks

New York Times, October 17, 2014

Let's say you came of political age during Barack Obama's 2008 campaign. Maybe you were swept up in the idealism. But now you've seen an election driven by hope give way to an election driven by fear. Partisans are afraid the other side might win. Candidates are pawns of the consultants because they're afraid of themselves. Everybody's afraid of the Ebola virus, ISIS and the fragile economy.

The politics of the last few years have made you disappointed, disillusioned and cynical. You look back at your earlier idealism as cotton candy.

Well, I'm here to make the case for political idealism.

I'm not making the case for the high idealism that surrounded that 2008 campaign. It was based on the idea that people are basically innocent and differences can be quickly transcended. It was based on the idea that society is easily malleable and it's possible to have quick transformational change. It was based in the idea of a heroic savior (remember those "Hope" posters).

I'm here to make the case for low idealism. The low idealist rejects the politics of innocence. The low idealist recoils from any movement that promises "new beginnings," tries to offer transcendent "bliss to be alive" moments or tries to fill people's spiritual voids.

Low idealism begins with a sturdy and accurate view of human nature. We're all a bit self-centered, self-interested and inclined to think we are nobler than we are. Montaigne wrote, "If others examined themselves attentively, as I do, they would find themselves, as I do, full of inanity and nonsense. Get rid of it I cannot without getting rid of myself."

Low idealism continues with a realistic view of politics. Politics is slow drilling through hard boards. It is a series of messy compromises. The core functions of government are negative - putting out fires, arresting criminals, settling disputes - and much of what government does is the unromantic work of preventing bad situations from getting worse.

Politicians operate in a recalcitrant medium with incomplete information, bad options and no sleep. Government in good times is merely dull; when it is enthralling, times are usually bad.

So low idealism starts with a tone of sympathy. Anybody who works in this realm deserves compassion and gentle regard. The low idealist knows that rallies with anthems and roaring are just make-believe, but has warm affection for any politician who exhibits neighborliness, courtesy and the ability to listen. The low idealist understands that those who try to rise above the messy business of deal-making often turn into zealots and wind up sinking below it. On the other hand, this kind of idealist has a full heart for those who serve the practical work of legislating: James Baker and Ted Kennedy in the old days; Bob Corker and Ron Wyden today. Believing experience is the best mode of education, he favors the competent old hand to the naïve outsider.

The low idealist is more romantic about the past than about the future. Though governing is hard, there are some miracles of human creation that have been handed down to us. These include, first and foremost, the American Constitution, but also the institutions that function pretty well, like the Congressional Budget Office and the Federal Reserve. Her first job is to work with existing materials, magnify what's best and incrementally reform what is worst.

The businessman might be enamored of disruptive change, but the low idealist abhors it in politics. The low idealist liked Obama's vow to hit foreign policy singles and doubles day by day, so long as there is a large vision to give long-term direction.

The low idealist admires a different kind of leader; not the martyr or the passionate crusader or the righteous populist. He likes the resilient one, who maybe has been tainted by scandals and has learned from his self-inflicted wounds that his own worst enemy is himself.

He likes the person who speaks only after paying minute attention to the way things really are, and whose proposals are grounded in the low stability of the truth.

The low idealist lives most of her life at a deeper dimension than the realm of the political. She believes, as Samuel Johnson put it, that "The happiness of society depends on virtue" - not primarily material conditions. But, and this is what makes her an idealist, she believes that better laws can nurture virtue. Statecraft is soulcraft. Good tax policies can arouse energy and enterprise. Good social programs can encourage compassion and community service.

Low idealism starts with a warts-and-all mentality, but holds that people can be improved by their political relationships, so it ends up with something loftier and more inspiring than those faux idealists who think human beings are not a problem and politics is a mostly a matter of moving money around.

WHAT MARKETS WILL (NYT)

By Paul Krugman

New York Times, October 17, 2014

In the Middle Ages, the call for a crusade to conquer the Holy Land was met with cries of "Deus vult!" - God wills it. But did the crusaders really know what God wanted? Given how the venture turned out, apparently not.

Now, that was a long time ago, and, in the areas I write about, invocations of God's presumed will are rare. You do, however, see a lot of policy crusades, and these are often justified with implicit cries of "Mercatus vult!" - the market wills it. But do those invoking the will of the market really know what markets want? Again, apparently not.

And the financial turmoil of the past few days has widened the gap between what we're told must be done to appease the market and what markets actually seem to be asking for.

To get more specific: We have been told repeatedly that governments must cease and desist from their efforts to mitigate economic pain, lest their excessive compassion be punished by the financial gods, but the markets themselves have never seemed to agree that these human sacrifices are actually necessary. Investors were supposed to be terrified by budget deficits, fearing that we were about to turn into Greece - Greece I tell you - but year after year, interest rates stayed low. The Fed's efforts to boost the economy were supposed to backfire as markets reacted to the prospect of runaway inflation, but market measures of expected inflation similarly stayed low.

How have policy crusaders responded to the failure of their dire predictions? Mainly with denial, occasionally with exasperation. For example, Alan Greenspan once declared the failure of interest rates and inflation to spike "regrettable, because it is fostering a false sense of complacency." But that was more than four years ago; maybe the sense of complacency wasn't all that false?

All in all, it's hard to escape the conclusion that people like Mr. Greenspan knew as much about what the market wanted as medieval crusaders knew about God's plan - that is, nothing.

In fact, if you look closely, the real message from the market seems to be that we should be running bigger deficits and printing more money. And that message has gotten a lot stronger in the past few days.

I'm not mainly talking about plunging stock prices, although that's surely telling us something (but as the late Paul Samuelson famously pointed out, stocks are not a reliable indicator of economic prospects: "Wall Street indexes predicted nine out of the last five recessions!") Instead, I'm talking about interest rates, which are flashing warnings, not of fiscal crisis and inflation, but of depression and deflation.

Most obviously, interest rates on long-term U.S. government debt - the rates that the usual suspects keep telling us will shoot up any day now unless we slash spending - have fallen sharply. This tells us that markets aren't worried about default, but that they are worried about persistent economic weakness, which will keep the Fed from raising the short-term interest rates it controls.

Interest rates on much European debt are even lower, because Europe's economic outlook is so bad, and we're not just talking about Germany. France is currently in conflict with the European Commission, which says that the projected French deficit is too big, but investors - who are still buying French bonds despite a 10-year interest rate of only 1.26 percent - are evidently much more worried about European stagnation than French default.

It's also instructive to look at interest rates on "inflation-protected" or "index" bonds, which are telling us two things. First, markets are practically begging governments to borrow and spend, say on infrastructure; interest rates on index bonds are barely above zero, so that financing for roads, bridges, and sewers would be almost free. Second, the difference between interest rates on index and ordinary bonds tells us how much inflation the market expects, and it turns out that expected inflation has fallen sharply over the past few months, so that it's now far below the Fed's target. In effect, the market is saying that the Fed isn't printing nearly enough money.

One question you might ask is why the market's pro-spending, print-more-money message has suddenly gotten louder. My guess is that it's mainly driven by events in Europe, where the slide into deflation and the growing public backlash against austerity have reached a tipping point. And it's very reasonable to worry that Europe's problems may spill over to the rest of us.

In any case, the next time you hear some talking head opining on what we must do to satisfy the markets, ask yourself, "How does he know?" For the truth is that when people talk about what markets demand, what they're really doing is trying to bully us into doing what they themselves want.

DON'T DEPEND ON THOSE FROZEN EGGS (NYT)

By Sarah Elizabeth Richards

New York Times, October 17, 2014

IF you're a woman worried about how to balance work and family, it's a good time to job-hunt in Silicon Valley. This week it was revealed that Facebook and Apple will include egg freezing in their benefits packages. After receiving your job offer, you can order your hormone shots and be on your way to stashing away some good eggs so you can ascend to Sheryl Sandberg-esque greatness and still have a chance of having a biological family in your 40s and beyond.

Reactions to the news have varied from accolades for making the expensive procedure available, to the cynical accusation that corporate America is avoiding creating family-friendly work environments under the guise of reproductive empowerment. Yet amid all the debate over egg freezing's role in women's careers, there has been less talk about the still serious limitations of the medical procedure.

The first generation of women who froze their eggs were hit over the head with warnings not to wait too long to start their families and to think of their frozen fertility as a backup. Such cautions are drowned out by the current enthusiasm - epitomized by information sessions rebranded as "egg freezing parties" and held at swanky hotels. We are forgetting an essential fact: Egg freezing isn't going to work for all women. Success varies according to the expertise of doctors and the quality of eggs, but even the best fertility centers report that a woman's chance of pregnancy per embryo transferred to the uterus is between 30 and 50 percent. The overall chance of success rises if a woman freezes enough eggs for numerous attempts.

It makes sense for a newly divorced 39-year-old to take that risk. But what about the 32-year-old who's encouraged to freeze by her new job perk? Will she make different decisions about work and motherhood that she might later regret?

Since the procedure became available in the United States about a decade ago, fertility doctors have worried that women would put their faith in an unproven technology, postpone having babies until their natural fertility was gone and end up devastated if the eggs didn't work. The American Society for Reproductive Medicine removed the experimental label from the procedure in 2012, but still doesn't recommend it to healthy women who simply want to delay childbearing.

Stereotypes abounded of women buying time to enjoy an extended adolescence of vacations and cocktails or to single-mindedly climb the corporate ladder. But that's not why most women froze. In a survey of 183 "first-wave" freezers who underwent the procedure between 2005 and 2011 at New York University Fertility Center, 88 percent said they were postponing having children because they didn't have a partner, and nearly 60 percent viewed egg freezing as a backup in case they could not get pregnant naturally. Only a small minority saw it strictly as an opportunity to

put off having kids until later.

This seems to be changing. Today, a younger set of potential egg freezers are more likely to see the procedure as a ticket to freedom. In a recent online poll of more than 560 women - most of them under 34 - conducted by Cosmopolitan magazine, over half said that, in addition to taking off the pressure to find a partner, they'd consider freezing in order to have as much fun as possible before having kids and so a baby wouldn't derail their career in their 20s and 30s. As a Bloomberg Businessweek cover put it this spring, "Freeze Your Eggs, Free Your Career." (That assumes women don't land that family-unfriendly dream job after the eggs thaw.)

There are no official statistics on how many women have undergone the procedure, but two of the country's oldest and largest programs - Reproductive Medicine Associates of New York in Manhattan and New York University Langone Medical Center - report that their cases have more than doubled in the last two years and that the age of the average freezer has dropped to about 36 from 39 nearly a decade ago. Other doctors say they've seen a stream of even younger patients, some in their 20s.

This is a positive development, since doctors have long urged women to freeze by their mid-30s, rather than wait until their egg quality is deteriorating. More women will have the option, as other companies surely follow Facebook and Apple's example, and as prices continue to drop. The cost of stimulating one's ovaries and surgically extracting anywhere from six to 10 eggs is typically around \$10,000. Many clinics offer lower fees or multi-cycle discounts, and one of the biggest centers charges \$12,500 for up to four cycles or 20 eggs, whichever comes first. But even with that many eggs, there's no guarantee.

Women who are anxious to preserve their fertility during their prime baby-making years should take advantage of every opportunity to freeze. But despite egg freezing's new cool factor, they should never forget its power to disappoint.

Sarah Elizabeth Richards is the author of "Motherhood, Rescheduled: The New Frontier of Egg Freezing and the Women Who Tried It."

ASIA'S AMERICAN ANGST (NYT)

By Roger Cohen

New York Times, October 17, 2014

SINGAPORE - Outside China, there is a consistent theme in Asia. It is concern that declining American power, credibility and commitment will leave the way open for Beijing to exercise dominance over the region. President Obama's "pivot to Asia" has been dismissed as hot air. American objectives announced without consequence betray a weak presidency; Asians have drawn their conclusions.

A new Chinese assertiveness in the South China Sea and elsewhere is palpable. By contrast, the United States seems less focused on the region since former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton left office. That, at least, is the perception here in Singapore, one of the world's global cities and a small island-state whose extraordinary economic success is dependent on stability in Asia. That is inconceivable without America as counterbalance to China. But the feeling here, if anything, is that the Obama administration has pivoted away.

Singapore, like much of Asia, is intrigued by the new all-change leadership of Narendra Modi in India. It is doubly intrigued because it sees in Modi the Lee Kuan Yew of India, a man with a near Singaporean commitment to modernity, efficiency and open trade. It is triply intrigued because it seeks a balance of power in Asia and the only possible long-term regional counterbalance to China is India.

That scenario is, however, a distant one. In all aspects but its freedom, a not inconsequential matter, India lags China by a great distance. As Asia waits for the fruits of the magical Modi makeover, the presence of the United States as a Pacific power retains all its importance. India is inwardly focused. Its global reach is the last concern of the average Indian. A perception of American retreat from its ordering global role has led the smaller nations of Asia to feel more vulnerable to China's systematic push outward in search of resources and control.

Singapore's success has depended on its ability to leapfrog geography, but it could only do that because the geography was not hostile. It could depend on the fact that the foreign territorial waters at its door remained open. Japan has been restrained from going nuclear by the assurance of America's treaty commitment to its defense. From north to south Asia, such assumptions

appear a little shakier.

Razeeen Sally, a visiting associate professor at the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, wrote this year in Singapore's Straits Times that: "A global city is where truly global services cluster. Business - in finance, the professions, transport and communications - is done in several languages and currencies, and across several time zones and jurisdictions. Such creations face a unique set of challenges in the early 21st century. Today, there appear to be only five global cities. London and New York are at the top, followed by Hong Kong and Singapore, Asia's two service hubs. Dubai, the Middle East hub, is the newest and smallest kid on the block. Shanghai has global-city aspirations, but it is held back by China's economic restrictions - the vestiges of an ex-command economy - and its Leninist political system. Tokyo remains too Japan-centric, a far cry from a global city."

No global city can prosper in an environment where stability appears less certain and freedom in danger of curtailment. That is one reason why America's commitment to Asia matters as China rises - and doubts about America stir unease.

It is not just that the Obama administration's commitment to concluding the Trans-Pacific Partnership, an ambitious free-trade agreement that would include Singapore, Vietnam and Japan among others, has appeared underwhelming. It is not merely that the United States, by some distance, is no longer the main trading partner of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, known as Asean. It is not simply that Chinese maritime bullying in an attempt to assert its right to natural resources in the South China Sea has proceeded unabated.

It is not just that Obama, during his last visit to Asia, gave a very evasive answer to a question about whether by saying the United States would protect the Japanese-administered Senkaku Islands (claimed by China) he risked drawing another "red line." The president said he thought the implication of the question was "that each and every time a country violates one of those norms the United States should go to war, or stand prepared to engage militarily, and if it doesn't then somehow we're not serious about those norms. Well, that's not the case." Try cashing that one at the bank.

It is all of these things, plus an uneasy general feeling. The "pivot to Asia," like the Syrian "red line," like "Assad must go," betrayed a common theme: words without meaning from an American president, commitments without follow-up, phrases without plans. In Asia as in Europe, these things get noted.

The American idea is still strong in Asia. Look no further than the brave pro-democracy demonstrators in Hong Kong. But ideas require commitment to back them.

TRAVELING WHILE ARAB (NYT)

By Alaa Al Aswany

New York Times, October 17, 2014

CAIRO - Some years ago, I was invited to a literary festival in London whose slogan was "change the world." I had some festival brochures in my hand as I went through the usual entry process at Heathrow Airport. But before I reached the exit, I was surprised to be stopped by a police officer. He examined my passport and leafed through the brochures. Then he asked, "How do you wish to change the world?"

His demeanor was apprehensive, so I took the question seriously and started explaining, in simple terms, that I was an author invited to the festival, that I had not personally chosen the slogan but it implied changing the way people think by means of writing. He seemed persuaded but, all the same, took my passport and I had to wait half an hour before it was returned.

I could provide scores of similar anecdotes. My literary works have been translated into 35 languages, and so I have traveled to various countries for numerous seminars and book signings. Despite the amicable way I am treated by people in the book world, in airports I am just another Arab, a potential terrorist.

I have no complaint about security measures because they have obviously been instituted for my protection as a passenger. Most security personnel perform their duties in a polite and exemplary manner, but some use the procedures to slight you or to make you understand that you are unwelcome or inferior.

The purpose of customs officers at airports is to catch smugglers, but if you look Arabic, or if you are black, or if you are a woman in a head scarf, they make a beeline for you and ask you a series

of provocative questions that I doubt have anything to do with smuggling.

"How many cartons of cigarettes have you got with you?" asked an officer, before she opened my suitcase. I replied that I had a single carton. "Are you sure about that?" she responded with a smirk, implying that I was lying.

I cope with these irritations by considering them part of the hassles of my work, but sometimes it becomes too much. Once, at John F. Kennedy International Airport, I was held for two hours because I objected to the officer's attitude; another time, at Nice, in France, an officer summoned me by curling his index finger, a gesture I find disrespectful. He examined my passport and instead of asking me the purpose of my trip, simply demanded, "What are you doing here?"

"I've come to buy some cows," I told him, in earnest. He looked confused: "Cows? But your passport gives your profession as 'dentist!'"

"There are some dentists," I explained (for that is my professional occupation), "whose hobby is collecting cows, and I'm one of them."

We stood there exchanging sidelong glances until, finally, he returned the passport and let me proceed.

A French police officer of Tunisian origin named Sihem Souid, who worked at Orly Airport in Paris, objected to the racist treatment of Arab and African travelers. She and seven of her colleagues complained about the behavior of other police officers, but nothing was done. Ms. Sihem went on to publish a book, "Omerta dans la police," that exposed the racist practices at Orly, including the story of an African woman whom an officer referred to as a "filthy black," and who was strip-searched and photographed, while the officer looked on, laughing.

Why do some officials mete out this kind of racist treatment at airports?

Clay Routledge, an associate professor of psychology at North Dakota State University, argues that some people crave control, and discriminate against others in order to gratify that desire and boost their self-esteem; for others, racism might provide a stark worldview in which "good" whites and Christians were ranged against "evil" blacks and Muslims. According to the scholar Edward W. Said, in his 1981 book "Covering Islam," Arabs and Muslims were generally portrayed in the Western media as either oil sheikhs or likely terrorists, while Islam itself was presented as a poorly defined and misunderstood abstraction.

It is true, of course, that terrifying and barbarous crimes committed by terrorists in the name of Islam have cast a shadow over the image of all Muslims. But the most basic rule of justice is that criminal responsibility lies with the individual, and not "by association" with a group that happens to share the same religious or ethnic identity. Can all Americans be held responsible for the torture of Iraqi detainees in Abu Ghraib prison?

In fact, the number of Arab and Muslim victims of Islamic extremist terrorism far exceeds the number of Western victims. In the last two years alone, terrorists in Egypt have killed more than 400 Egyptian police officers and soldiers.

Christianity has had its phases of persecution of so-called heretics, sects, Jews and Muslims, as well as its wars of religion, its inquisitions and crusades. Over centuries, such crimes were carried out in the name of a faith that today preaches love and tolerance. No one religion is more bloodthirsty than another, or has a monopoly on violent extremism. Just as Islam can be followed as a humane religion that urges tolerance, so, too, can it be twisted by some into a belief system that justifies terrorism.

If we want to make this world a better place for our children, we have to teach them that, different as we may be in color, sex, culture or religion, we are all human beings who feel and think and suffer in the same way. We must put aside our prejudices and deal with one another on the basis of equality and individual responsibility. Only then will a black or Arab traveler in a Western airport be treated just like anybody else.

Alaa Al Aswany is the author of the novel "The Yacoubian Building" and other books. This article was translated by Russell Harris from the Arabic.

BIPARTISAN SOLUTIONS, NOT BLAME, CAN HELP IN MANAGING EBOLA (WP)

Washington Post, October 17, 2014

THE EBOLA virus reached this country at the height of the 2014 campaign, so perhaps it was inevitable that the political parties would try to exploit it. To Republicans, the situation proves once again that President Obama has failed to protect Americans. In one of the milder versions of this

allegation, Louisiana Gov. Bobby Jindal published an op-ed faulting Mr. Obama for spending Centers for Disease Control and Prevention resources on grants for exercise and healthy diets rather than fighting infectious disease. Some Democrats say, meanwhile, that we wouldn't have to worry about Ebola if not for budget cuts to the CDC and the National Institutes of Health, for which the GOP alone is to blame. As one especially inflammatory TV ad puts it: "Republican cuts kill." Refutation of these memes may be a lost cause, but we'll try anyway. In brief: Ebola is no one's "fault." The United States and other nations should have responded far sooner to the outbreak in West Africa. The CDC could have done a better job managing the situation in Dallas, where exposure to a Liberian patient apparently resulted in the infection of at least two nurses. Yet this is an unprecedented challenge for the American health-care system, and everyone involved - from the president to front-line health-care workers - is acting in good faith and, necessarily, learning on the job.

As for budget cuts, it's preposterous to assert either that more money would guarantee a cure or that one party alone is responsible for the alleged lack of funds. As The Post's Fact Checker, Glenn Kessler, concluded after a thorough examination of the budgetary history: "Obama's Republican predecessor oversaw big increases in public-health sector spending, and both Democrats and Republicans in recent years have broadly supported efforts to rein in federal spending. Sequestration resulted from a bipartisan agreement."

When you get past the campaign demagoguery, the Ebola problem has actually revealed fundamental agreement between supposedly pro-government Democrats and supposedly anti-government Republicans. The two parties both think that the United States needs an effective federal government to cope with threats such as Ebola. Mr. Jindal argues that "the federal government has one duty above all: To protect the health, safety and well-being of its citizens." He even maintains that the Constitution's mandate that the federal government protect the states from invasion "should apply as much to infectious disease as to foreign powers."

Now that both parties have revealed their preference for effective national government, they can think more clearly about Washington's budgetary issues. Sequestration is more symptom than cause; the root problem is a general refusal to tackle entitlements, tax breaks and other sacrosanct programs, which leaves the discretionary budget to bear the brunt of deficit reduction. And even if there's no evidence that budget cuts "caused" the mistakes in the Ebola response, it's likely that more resources, more thoughtfully allocated, may be needed in the near future. The broader lesson is to readjust federal priorities so that leaders actually have the capacity to prevent and, if necessary, govern through crises - and not just blame each other for them.

THE MAYOR'S PLAN TO REPLACE D.C. GENERAL TO HOUSE THE HOMELESS IS ON THE RIGHT TRACK (WP)

Washington Post, October 16, 2014

MAYOR Vincent C. Gray (D) released on Tuesday the outlines of a plan to close the city's shelter for homeless families at the former D.C. General Hospital. A day later, his administration celebrated the opening of a \$450,000 children's playground at the site. Cutting that ribbon was an acknowledgment of the difficulty the city faces in closing the dilapidated facility. Until other housing alternatives can be found, the shelter remains the last resort for desperate families.

"We know that D.C. General is not an optimum place for families," said B.B. Otero, deputy mayor for health and human services. "But while families are here, we want to make sure that there's a safe place for the children to use."

Mr. Gray is right to try to make the existing shelter as habitable as possible even as he lays the groundwork for its closure. And he is on the right track in mapping a strategy that would replace the 300-room shelter at D.C. General with smaller shelters across the city. Under the plan released Tuesday, by fall 2015 the city would spend an estimated \$52 million to lease or construct six shelters that would each house up to 50 families. The city has already issued a solicitation for potential properties and, according to an administration official, there has been some interest. But, as critics pointed out, there will be formidable hurdles in finding suitable facilities in a competitive real estate market, and Mr. Gray's time frame of a year may well be overly optimistic. Neighborhood resistance is likely, too, so it will be important to give the public all the relevant facts. That is the best way to persuade residents that such shelters do not pose a threat. Already in the city are four homeless shelters about the same size as those proposed in Mr. Gray's plan.

Most people don't even realize they are there; they don't cause any problems.

Mr. Gray's plan, issued in the final months of his administration, should be a call to action by the D.C. Council and the next mayor. The goal: to empty D.C. General of the children who made the creation of a playground such a sad necessity.

OBAMA'S FAILING STRATEGY IN YEMEN (WP)

Washington Post, October 17, 2014

PRESIDENT OBAMA cited Yemen as a model for U.S. operations against the Islamic State last month, not long after he told an interviewer that the intervention in Libya was his greatest foreign policy regret. In fact, the two countries offer similar lessons in the deficiencies of Mr. Obama's strategy. By backing local forces with airpower in Libya, the United States and its allies were able to overthrow a murderous regime - but, as Mr. Obama acknowledged, the failure to assist with building a state afterward has facilitated Libya's collapse into chaos.

Now Yemen appears in danger of disintegrating, as sectarian insurgents backed by Iran capture large parts of the country's north, even while al-Qaeda forces surge in the south. Once again a narrowly focused U.S. engagement has helped make the breakdown possible.

The Obama administration has conducted extensive military operations in Yemen, but they have been strictly aimed at carrying out strikes against al-Qaeda operatives believed to be plotting against the United States. U.S. trainers in the country have worked with counterterrorism forces, eschewing an attempt to build a reliable national army. While U.S. diplomats and envoys such as CIA Director John Brennan helped to broker the political transition that removed former dictator Ali Abdullah Saleh after 33 years in office, only minimal resources have gone toward building Yemeni political institutions, such as courts and civil society.

Now the administration is watching as the political and security order it backed unravels.

Insurgents known as Houthis, who adhere to an offshoot of Shiite Islamism, first captured the capital, Sanaa, late last month and dictated terms to U.S.-backed president Abed Rabbo Mansour Hadi. Now they have seized a major Red Sea port that contains Yemen's largest oil refinery and are continuing to advance southward. As government forces crumble or disappear, al-Qaeda is expanding its hold over parts of the south, where an independence movement is also reviving.

A State Department spokesman said Wednesday that the administration is not sure what the Houthis' objectives are; Yemen-watchers believe they could range from forcing changes in a proposed federalization scheme for the country to creating a new state under the Houthis' control. But the movement's hostility toward the United States and its principal allies in the region is not in doubt. U.S. officials believe the Houthis have received materiel and training from Iran; their slogan, including the phrase "death to America," is taken from the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps and Lebanon's Hezbollah. Saudi Arabia, which joined one of the Yemeni government's six military campaigns against the Houthis before 2010, sees the movement as a major threat.

The Houthis' surge may make it impossible for the Obama administration to continue critical operations against al-Qaeda, which reportedly have included 19 drone strikes this year alone. It should force a reexamination of Mr. Obama's model of managing threats from jihadist movements with narrowly focused training and advising of local forces and no effort to help build national institutions. Interventions that ignore the need to create functioning political systems and professional forces that can ensure domestic security only open the door to failed states - and heightened threats to the United States.

IS SEX ONLY FOR RICH PEOPLE? (WP)

By Catherine Rampell

Washington Post, October 16, 2014

America has decided: Sex is for rich people. Non-procreative sex in particular.

How else would you explain the trap we're laying for poor people who deign to get it on?

Our country apparently doesn't want low-income Americans to have free access to birth control, either by compelling all insurance plans to offer it or by adequately funding public reproductive health programs. In many schools - predominantly located in low-income, high-teen-pregnancy areas - we don't even teach kids how contraception works. We also don't want them to have easy access to abortions when they inevitably get pregnant because they're not using birth control, with states such as Texas and Mississippi trying to shutter their few remaining abortion clinics.

Then we don't help them very much after they birth those unplanned kids, instead publicly chastising irresponsible single mothers for having babies they can't afford and offering little assistance in the form of child care, education or cash. Dumping unwanted children onto the child welfare system isn't exactly celebrated, either.

By process of elimination, the solution for low-income people is to never, ever have sex. So seems the logic behind many of these policies: If only we make it harder for people to have access to family planning services, and financially painful to raise children who predictably result from sex in the absence of those services, people who cannot afford to raise children will choose celibacy.

This, of course, is magical thinking. The belief that we can get entire classes of Americans to practice abstinence until they're financially ready for marriage and children is a right-wing delusion on par with the left-wing delusions that go into socialism: Both rely on a fundamental miscalculation about human nature. If the socialists wished to legislate away self-interest, the moralists wish to legislate away libido.

Data show just how difficult it is to keep those unmarried libidos in check. Tawdry though it may be, nearly 9 in 10 young, unwed adults have had sex, according to the National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy.

Which is why subsidies for family planning services make a good deal of sense. And when I say services, I mean not only financial access to contraception but also education about how it works. Study after study has documented astounding amounts of confusion and misinformation about baby-making. One in 5 unmarried young men, for example, incorrectly believes that having sex standing up is a form of birth control. Among women who have unintended births because they weren't using contraception, about a third say they hadn't thought they actually could get pregnant, perhaps because they'd had sex before and never previously landed "in the family way." But who could really blame young'uns for their ignorance and silly extrapolations, when even a former congressman, Todd Akin, once declared that an effective form of contraception is a woman's internal desire to "shut that whole thing down"?

It should be no wonder, then, that more than half of all pregnancies are unintended, and that the proportion is 70 percent for single women in their 20s, as Isabel Sawhill discusses in her thoughtful book, "Generation Unbound: Drifting into Sex and Parenthood without Marriage."

Government spending on family planning offers a huge return on investment, not just for families but for the public. In 2010, every \$1 invested in helping women avoid pregnancies they didn't want saved \$5.68 in Medicaid expenditures that otherwise would have been needed, according to the Guttmacher Institute. Once upon a time, both left and right understood this calculus. Title X, the federal family planning program that primarily serves low-income women (and whose funding has fallen 18 percent over the last decade, after adjusting for inflation) was passed under President Nixon with unanimous Senate support. Today this and other federal programs that democratize family planning (including the Affordable Care Act) are subject to constant gutting and mockery, with pundits referring to advocates of affordable birth control as "sluts," and politicians asking why the state should be subsidizing "recreational" activities like sex.

America is increasingly turning into a two-track society when it comes to fertility decisions, with high-income, highly educated Americans availed of better and more options (even, it turns out, employer-provided egg-freezing services); and low-income women drifting into childbearing that they themselves say they're not ready for. Despite what opponents say, improving access to family planning services and reversible contraceptives is not about encouraging sex - biology takes care of this already - or that false boogeyman of sterilization. It is about giving low-income women the same control over when, and with whom, they have children, as is afforded to their higher-income sisters.

STOCK MARKET TURMOIL AND THE GLOBAL DEBT TRAP (WP)

By Robert J. Samuelson

Washington Post, October 16, 2014

Six years after the onset of the financial crisis, the world still has too much debt. The total in 2013, according to the McKinsey Global Institute, came to about \$186 trillion. This includes government debt, corporate bonds and loans to individuals, families and businesses. Since 2008, the amount has actually increased by about \$34 trillion. The numbers are so large that it's hard for ordinary mortals to connect them with the world economy's ability to grow at a decent and self-sustained

pace. Doubts about this underlie the stock market's recent turmoil.

Let it be said that, as with most major market moves, we usually know only in retrospect whether they reflected basic economic realities or just a shift in crowd psychology (Ebola?). "Global outlook [is] nowhere near as bad as markets suggest," Capital Economics, a forecasting firm, wrote clients. This is possible.

If the market's wild swings transcend mood, the explanation may involve the potentially dangerous interaction between high debt and low economic growth. To service their debts, borrowers - governments as well as companies and individuals - need rising income, whether from taxes, profits or salaries. If income stagnates or declines, paying debts' interest or principal becomes harder.

Worse, borrowers and lenders may get caught in a self-destructive, vicious cycle that ends with deflation (falling prices). To make loan repayments, borrowers curb spending. But spending is the lifeblood of modern economies, so if too many governments, people or firms cut back, the economy doesn't generate the income that the debtors need to meet their loan commitments. What's logical for a few debtors becomes catastrophic if everyone does it. There's a debt trap that threatens growth.

By itself, the slowdown in global economic growth, predicted by the International Monetary Fund and others, is fairly mild. It's undesirable but not disastrous. What would make it disastrous is if it triggers a broader and deeper economic pullback: a new recession or financial crisis - involving defaults, bankruptcies and panics. The consequences could be devastating, because the world hasn't yet recovered from the 2008-09 crisis. Any deflation would increase debt burdens by forcing borrowers to repay with costlier money.

A new report from four economists echoes these fears. First, they note that worldwide debt - again, governmental and private - has continued to grow. Since 2008, it has increased from 174 percent of global gross domestic product to 212 percent. The biggest increases occurred among "emerging market" countries, led by China. Its debt soared by 72 percentage points to 217 percent of GDP in 2013. In 2013, similar debt/GDP percentages were 264 for the United States, 257 for the euro zone (the 18 countries using the euro) and 411 for Japan.

As these figures suggest, there's no "right" or "wrong" amount of debt. The correct amount depends on how fast a country's economy is growing, the level of interest rates, how well the debt is invested and - a crucial factor - lenders' faith that they will be repaid. If confidence vanishes, trouble looms.

Called the Geneva Report, the study warns against the "poisonous combination" of high debt and low economic growth. It says that emerging-market countries "could be at the epicenter of the next crisis." Presumably, this would mean losses on public and private bonds and loans. The study also says the euro zone is vulnerable. (The study's authors: Vincent Reinhart of Morgan Stanley, Lucrezia Reichlin of the London Business School, Philip Lane of Trinity College Dublin and Luigi Buttiglione of Brevan Howard Investment Products.)

It's not clear how weak the global economy is. There are (relative) bright spots. Both the United States and Great Britain have achieved moderate growth, in part because their households have "deleveraged" - that is, cut debt. From 2007 to 2013, U.S. households reduced mortgage debt by \$1.2 trillion through repayment and default, says the Geneva Report. Businesses have done something similar: They've refinanced old debt at lower interest rates and longer maturities. For households and firms, lower debt burdens free up more cash for present spending.

The roughly 25 percent decline in oil prices since June - most of which will be passed along to drivers at the pump - is another possible positive. Assuming the cuts hold, gasoline prices could drop to close to \$3 a gallon with annual U.S. consumer savings approaching \$100 billion, says oil analyst Larry Goldstein. (However, Goldstein warns that falling prices may signal a faltering economy.)

Can we avoid a global debt trap and regain faster economic growth rates that foster stability and human well-being? Whatever debt's virtues as a first response to deep slumps, it has its limits. We cannot promote prosperity simply by piling new debts atop the old. We need to build a stronger economic foundation.

Read more from Robert Samuelson's archive.

EBOLA CHALLENGES AMERICA'S ABILITY TO ADAPT (WP)

By Michael Gerson

Washington Post, October 17, 2014

In any health care setting, it is wise to listen to the nurses, who see all. Their reports from Dallas about the initial procedures used in treating Thomas Eric Duncan are appalling. Safety suits with exposed necklines left nurses to cover skin with tape. When tape is removed, it abrades the skin. One health expert I consulted described this practice in dealing with Ebola as "moronic."

Proper protocols are now in place. But Ebola in America has been an exacting and brutal teacher. First, we have seen that the infectiousness of Ebola increases as a patient grows sicker and the level of the virus spikes in his or her bloodstream. To the general public, this should provide some reassurance. When a patient begins to feel weak and achy at home, he or she is less likely to spread the disease. None of the people who lived in tight quarters with Duncan has (as of this writing) reported infection.

But for health workers treating very ill patients, the danger of infection is dramatically elevated. Any crack in a glove, any touching of the eye, might be enough. And when a patient's viral load is sky-high, it is likely to be found even in his or her saliva and mucus. Theoretically, even a cough spraying sputum onto exposed skin might transmit the disease. A person in this condition would be too sick to walk the streets. The risk is to health-care workers who are not properly -protected.

Second, we've learned that providing protection to health workers is a skill not possessed by every hospital. Reading a protocol off a Web site is one thing. Implementing a protocol, with perfection as the only acceptable standard, is another. It is the distance between reading a book on batting and taking a pitch in the major leagues. Most hospitals are poorly prepared to take very ill Ebola patients. This demands either the immediate deployment of federal Ebola "SWAT teams" when a case is reported or the careful transfer of patients to more competent facilities. The hurt feelings of local hospitals or mayors should matter not at all.

Third, we've seen that the federal response to Ebola has had serious weaknesses under stress. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention assumed that any large hospital would know what it was doing in isolating an Ebola patient. The assumption was wrong. The CDC allowed a nurse with an elevated temperature who had been heavily involved with Duncan's treatment to board a plane. This showed inadequate respect for the disease and a tin ear on matters of public trust. The knowledge and dedication of American public health officials are unequalled. But the implementation and judgment of public health systems have sometimes been seriously flawed. So how should our political system respond? Not an easy question to answer, especially three weeks before an election. Those who pursue political sport during a health emergency - either finding a symbol of liberal incompetence or a symbol of inadequate public investment - are not helping matters. Fighting infectious disease is an essential federal role, not an ideological metaphor.

The real questions are: Can government learn from its mistakes? And will it be allowed to? The goal is to strengthen the current disease response and be better prepared for the next one (which might, unlike Ebola, involve the serious threat of a large public outbreak in the United States). Somehow, even during a politically charged season, our Ebola debate must be an exercise in learning lessons.

In all this, some perspective is necessary. By the end of the year, according to the World Health Organization, there could be up to 10,000 new cases of Ebola in West Africa each week.

Information from inside the affected countries is already growing sketchy as ties to the outside world are cut. This problem will not be solved by canceling the few remaining commercial flights out of Monrovia. The economic, political and social collapse of Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone would swell the flow of refugees and increase the risk of outbreaks in other populous parts of Africa or in even more distant places, such as India.

By all means, do what is necessary in Dallas. But billions in spending and thousands of hospital beds are now urgently required to prevent a human catastrophe involving the destabilization of West Africa. The spread of a global pandemic would make Ebola harder to fight for everyone.

FIGHT FEAR OF EBOLA WITH THE FACTS (WP)

By Richard E. Besser

Washington Post, October 15, 2014

When you work in public health, you become tuned in to fear. And the fear level in the United

States just ticked up a notch. All our high-tech equipment, protective gear and disease management didn't protect two Dallas health-care workers from Ebola. When government officials tell us we are safe and then caregivers get sick, what does this do to trust?

Wearing protective equipment seems straightforward, but it isn't. When you remove all those layers, you can contaminate yourself, and avoiding that takes training, practice and supervision. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention made a tactical error when it said that any hospital in the United States could safely manage a patient with Ebola if it followed the proper protocol. Sure, any hospital with sufficient training and expertise in handling infectious disease can do this, but it may be that only four U.S. hospitals meet that standard - the ones with specialized units created for this kind of emergency. Transmission in the first regular hospital to treat an Ebola patient stokes fear, and fear is one of Ebola's most common side effects.

This week, I was scheduled to speak at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland on "Pandemics, Public Health, and Political Change: The Critical Importance of Communication." I've given the talk before. It's a reflection on how we handled the 2009 flu pandemic when I worked at the CDC, as fear was outracing the disease. The weapons we used to attack the fear - transparency, truth and constant communication - were critical. It helped Americans understand what they were facing and what to do about it, and it helped lessen the impact of the pandemic. Ironically, the university canceled my visit because I had recently returned from a 10-day trip covering the outbreak in Africa. The level of risk posed by my appearance was vanishingly small, but fear won anyway.

Sharona Hoffman, the professor of law and bioethics who invited me, wrote: "Unfortunately, The University President and Provost have decided against having you come to campus on October 15th. Although they understand how small the risk is, they felt that we needed to err on the side of extreme caution because we don't have the ability to ask all potential attendees if they feel comfortable with the situation."

Would I like to address the students via Skype? I turned them down. I did not want to feed the idea that anyone who has been to West Africa, even if not sick, poses a risk.

Infectious disease often leads to irrational behavior. It's a primal defense. We saw this during the early days of the AIDS pandemic, as infected children were barred from schools and some health professionals wouldn't provide care. We are seeing it again now with Ebola. Proactively, before I returned from Liberia, ABC News addressed employee concerns during a call with experts from the CDC. It made sure that employees could ask questions of some of the world's leading experts on Ebola transmission. It also made sure anyone who was uncomfortable with my presence knew they could keep their distance.

Most employees have been willing to work with me, but some have chosen not to. I respect their right to make that choice, but I've been surprised by how many colleagues have waved from across the room and quickly made an exit. Others won't enter my office. A colleague told me she received a note from two mothers of children her daughter plays with. Would she be having contact with me at work? If so, they didn't want her daughter to play with their children for 21 days, the longest known incubation period for Ebola.

My post-Liberia appearance on "The View" was initially canceled because some felt uncomfortable being near me, but it was rescheduled after I appeared on "Good Morning America." The hosts of "The View" weren't just trying to make me feel welcome when they hugged me after I walked onto the set - they were trying to reduce fear in everyone.

The best way to fight fear and stigma is with facts. The fact is that many viruses are easily transmitted, but Ebola is not one of them. You can get infected with the flu, the common cold, chicken pox and measles from someone who doesn't even know that he or she is sick. That is one reason those viruses can spread so quickly. To get infected with Ebola, you need direct contact with the bodily fluids of a patient who is symptomatic of the disease - someone very sick indeed. This is not casual contact. Yes, a nurse and another health-care worker have caught it. In some Ebola outbreaks, 25 percent of cases Ebola are in the medical workers who are taking care of Ebola patients, and the rest are mostly seen in those who provide care in the home and who have touched the bodies of victims at funerals. You cannot get Ebola walking through an airport or speaking to someone with the disease.

It's natural for people to think, "Wow, even if you're taking every precaution in the world, like those health-care workers did, you can catch Ebola." But this is wrong. You are putting yourself in much

greater danger if you don't get a flu shot than if you talk to someone from West Africa. You cannot catch Ebola in a lecture hall hearing about the power of communication during a public health crisis. I expect universities to fight this kind of fear, not feed it. What we need to do is communicate, as strongly and as often as we can, what the real risks are and aren't.

NOTHING TO FEAR BUT PANIC ITSELF (WP)

By David Ignatius

Washington Post, October 17, 2014

Richard Preston, whose 1994 book "The Hot Zone" brought the Ebola virus terrifyingly to life for readers, once described how, during his research, his biohazard suit had ripped open, exposing him to a potentially fatal toxin.

"I started to feel giddy," Preston wrote in "Panic in Level 4," a 2008 collection of essays. "It was an intoxicating rush of fear, a sensation that all I needed to do was relax and let the fear take hold, and I could drift away on waves of panic, screaming for help."

You could feel a shiver of panic coursing through the American body politic this week as the country struggled with a metastatic set of crises: the spread of the Ebola virus, the surge of Islamic State terrorists and the buckling global economy. Listening to the news, many Americans must have felt a small version of Preston's "intoxicating rush of fear" that the protection layer had been breached.

President Obama tried to speak calmly to a rattled nation on Wednesday, describing how he had kissed and embraced nurses at Emory University Hospital who had treated Ebola patients safely. Don't panic, was the unspoken message. It's safe. Listening to the president, you couldn't help but wonder if he was straining to keep a polarized, fearful country from losing its cool.

Panic is a natural human response to danger, but it's one that severely compounds the risk.

Frightened people want to protect themselves, sometimes without thinking about others. Often, they get angry and want to find someone to blame for catastrophe. Inevitably, they spread information without checking whether it's true.

Fear brings out the best in some people and the worst in others. It's a test of character, for individuals and nations. That's why the stories of the New York City firefighters rushing upstairs to their deaths in the twin towers on the morning of Sept. 11, 2001, became a kind of national legend. It showed the human spirit in its most selfless form.

We can't all be heroic firefighters, and this week we began to see a display of less noble emotions. Inevitably, the blame game began: How had Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital misdiagnosed Ebola victim Thomas Eric Duncan and allowed two nurses to become infected? Fair question, but criticism soon escalated to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, probably the world's best resource in combating infectious disease and one of the first responders to the Ebola epidemic. Rather than cheering the firefighters, people were sniping at them.

My own business, the news media, has a peculiar responsibility in times like these. We have to deliver information quickly and reliably, and also hold officials accountable for their performance - all without unnecessarily frightening people or contributing to the kind of hysteria that makes public-health measures more difficult. This role is harder in an unfiltered, Internet-driven media world, where careful reporting can look to some people like suppression of information.

One of the best comments I saw came from Shepard Smith, an anchor for Fox News, a network not always a voice for reason and calm. On Wednesday afternoon, Smith admonished viewers not to panic about Ebola. He was passionate, and maybe you can argue that journalists shouldn't give medical advice, but here's part of what he said:

"Today, given what we know, you should have no concerns about Ebola at all. None. I promise. Unless a medical professional has contacted you personally and told you of some sort of possible exposure, fear not. Do not listen to the hysterical voices on the radio and the television or read the fear-provoking words online. The people who say and write hysterical things are being very irresponsible. . . .

"Suggestions have been made publicly that leaders and medical professionals may be lying to us. Those suggestions are completely without basis and fact. There is no evidence of any kind of which we at Fox News are aware that leaders have lied about anything regarding Ebola. . . . There is no Ebola spreading in America. Should that change, our reporting will change."

Smith was hammered online for telling Fox viewers (and everyone else) to calm down. But he was

right. Amazon may be offering books with titles like "Ebola: The Ultimate Survival Guide." But the best advice for now is what Smith offered viewers: Don't panic. And get a flu shot.

ON EBOLA, WE NEED A DOSE OF CANDOR (WP)

By Eugene Robinson

Washington Post, October 17, 2014

Let's make a deal: We'll all promise not to panic about Ebola if the experts - especially those at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention - agree to get their stories straight.

They should begin by giving a better explanation of why they have concluded it would be wrong to "stop the flights" arriving from the Ebola "hot zone," beginning with the fact that there are no such flights: There is no direct commercial air service between the countries at the epicenter of the outbreak - Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea - and the United States.

Travelers from those countries must make one or more intermediate stops to get here, meaning that any travel ban would have to target individuals based on nationality or recent visits to the affected countries. Experts should explain why this idea is neither crazy nor politically incorrect but simply, in their professional opinion, inadvisable.

The risk that limiting travel to and from West Africa would hamper efforts to control the outbreak is real. Saying that charter flights could be arranged for aid workers ignores the necessarily decentralized and ad hoc nature of responses to this kind of emergency. Doctors, nurses and other volunteers need to be able to go into a hot zone when they are ready, not when seats happen to open up on a charter.

They also need to know beforehand that they will be able to rotate out of the zone in a timely fashion. There is an obvious role that military or charter aircraft can play in evacuating aid workers who have been in close contact with Ebola patients. For those with less risk of exposure - those who, say, could advise health officials in affected countries but not actually treat victims of the disease - travel restrictions would serve no purpose except to make them think twice about going. With polls showing majority support for some kind of travel ban, CDC Director Tom Frieden and others should not just state their position on the issue but show a willingness to engage with those who disagree. Experts should acknowledge that restrictions might help keep out the Ebola virus in the short run - but would, in their view, put Americans more at risk in the long run.

Pressed at a House committee hearing Thursday about travel curbs, Frieden gave a terse answer: "We will consider any options to better protect Americans." Asked about other countries that have imposed restrictions, Frieden said he was unfamiliar with the details. Really? Wouldn't that be important to know?

Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, did a somewhat better job at the hearing of explaining the consensus view: It is better to interview, track and, if necessary, quarantine the 100 to 150 travelers entering the United States from West Africa daily than risk the likelihood that at least a few infected people would manage to circumvent any ban.

Health experts also need to explain what went wrong in Dallas, Cleveland and points in between. With two nurses at Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital in Dallas now being treated for Ebola, it is obvious that normal protocols for dealing with a highly infectious disease are not adequate for this virus. The most urgent task for the CDC and the National Institutes of Health is making sure that health workers nationwide - the Americans most at risk - are armed with procedures and equipment that can keep them safe.

It is understandable, perhaps, that the Dallas hospital was initially unprepared to handle Ebola patient Thomas Eric Duncan and that nurses involved in his early treatment might have been exposed. But now every hospital in the country should be on notice. The vast majority of health-care professionals will never deal with an Ebola case - but cases "could present anywhere," as Rep. Jan Schakowsky (D-Ill.) said at Thursday's hearing, which means that all nurses and doctors need to be prepared.

There also has to be an explanation of how the CDC handled the case of Amber Joy Vinson, the second nurse with the virus. First we were told that she should not have traveled home from Cleveland to Dallas on a commercial airliner. Then CDC officials admitted that they cleared her to take the flight, even though she had a fever of 99.5 degrees. Then we learned that she might have been symptomatic - and thus potentially infectious - while on that Frontier Airlines plane.

The thing is, Americans are anxious about Ebola but not panicked. This will change, however, unless experts speak more honestly about the nature of the threat.

CHARLES KRAUTHAMMER: EBOLA VS. CIVIL LIBERTIES (WP)

By Charles Krauthammer

Washington Post, October 17, 2014

Unnervingly, the U.S. public health services remain steps behind the Ebola virus. Contact tracing is what we do, Centers for Disease Control Director Tom Frieden assured the nation. It will stop the epidemic "in its tracks." And yet nurses Nina Pham and Amber Vinson, who developed Ebola, were not even among the 48 contacts the CDC was initially following.

Nor were any of the doctors and nurses who treated the "index patient," Thomas Duncan. No one even had a full list of caregivers.

The other reassurance was: Not to worry. We know what we're doing. We have protocols. When, however, we got the first Ebola transmission in the United States, it was blamed on a "breach in protocol."

Translation: "Don't blame us. The nurse screwed up." The nurses union was not amused. Frieden had to walk that back the next day, saying he didn't mean to blame anyone.

Frieden had said that "the care of Ebola can be done safely, but it is hard to do it safely." Meaning: In theory, it's easy; in practice, very dangerous. Unfortunately, that's not what he said on Day One. When you hear it two weeks later, you begin to wonder.

These missteps raise questions of competence, candor and false confidence. But the problem is deeper. And it rests not in our doctors but in ourselves.

In the face of a uniquely dangerous threat, we Americans have trouble recalibrating our traditional (and laudable) devotion to individual rights and civil liberties. That is the fundamental reason we've been so slow in getting serious about Ebola. Consider:

1. Privacy.

Pham's identity was initially withheld. In normal circumstances, privacy deserves absolute respect. But these are not normal circumstances. We're talking about a possible epidemic by an unseen pathogen that kills 70 percent of its victims. Contact tracing is the key to stopping it, we've been told. What faster way to alert anyone who might have had contact with Pham than releasing her name? Why lose 24 hours during which people have to guess if they'd had contact with someone carrying the virus?

2. Quarantine.

When Duncan was first hospitalized, the CDC said it would locate his contacts and check regularly for symptoms. For the secondary and tertiary contacts, this made sense. But not for those in the inner "concentric circle." They had had close contact with Duncan and were living in an apartment requiring massive decontamination. They should have been quarantined immediately.

Yet initially they were not. In fact, the word quarantine was not uttered by a single authority during the first news conference revealing Duncan's illness.

It's understandable. Quarantine is the ultimate violation of civil liberties. Having committed no crime, having done no wrong, you are sentenced to house arrest or banishment. It's unfair. It's, well, un-American. But when an epidemic threatens, we do it because we must.

3. Evacuation.

Why have we been treating Ebola patients at their local hospital? This is insane. They don't have the expertise or the training. They will make mistakes - as we've now seen repeatedly at Texas Health Presbyterian.

Besides, training and equipping every hospital in America to treat this rare disease would be ridiculously expensive and 99 percent wasted. Every Ebola patient should be evacuated to a specialized regional isolation center, such as the ones in Atlanta, Omaha or Bethesda.

Not because these facilities possess some unique treatment. There is no treatment known to cure the disease. But they know how to prevent contagion. Local hospitals don't. It took 15 days and Amber Vinson to wake the authorities up to this obvious reality.

4. Travel bans.

British Airways has already canceled all flights to the affected countries in West Africa. We haven't. A couple more cases of imported Ebola and we will.

Why are we waiting? The CDC argues that a travel ban would stop the flow of medical assistance

to West Africa. This is silly. Simply make an exception for health-care workers. They apply to federal authorities, who charter their flights (or use military aircraft already headed there) and monitor their movements until 21 days after their return home. Done.

President Obama, in his messianic period, declared that choosing between security and liberty was a false choice. On the contrary. It is the eternal dilemma of every free society. Politics is the very process of finding some equilibrium between these two competing values.

Regarding terrorism, we've developed a fairly reasonable balance. But it took time. With Ebola, we don't have time. Viruses don't wait. The sooner we reset the balance - the sooner we get serious - the safer we will be.

OBAMA NEEDS TO DIAL BACK HIS SYRIA STRATEGY (WP)

By Fareed Zakaria

Washington Post, October 17, 2014

From the start, President Obama's Syria policy has foundered because of a gap between words and deeds. And he's done it again. Having declared that the aim of U.S. policy is to "degrade and ultimately destroy" the Islamic State, Obama now finds himself pressured to escalate military action in Syria. This is a path destined for failure. In fact, the administration should abandon its lofty rhetoric and make clear that it is focused on a strategy against the Islamic State that is actually achievable: containment.

Escalation in Syria cannot meet American objectives and is almost certain to produce chaos and unintended consequences. The central reality is that Washington has no serious local partners on the ground. It is important to understand that the Free Syrian Army doesn't actually exist. A Congressional Research Service report points out that the name does not refer to any "organized command and control structure with national reach." The director of national intelligence has testified that the opposition to the Bashar al-Assad regime is composed of 1,500 separate militias. We call a bunch of these militias - which are anti-Assad and also anti-Islamist (we hope) - the Free Syrian Army.

Scholar Joshua Landis - whose blog Syria Comment is an essential source - estimates that the Assad regime controls about half of Syrian territory, though much more of the population. The Islamic State controls about one-third of the country, and the other militias control a little less than 20 percent. But the largest and most effective of these non-Islamic State groups are al-Qaeda-affiliated and also deadly enemies of the United States. The non-jihadi groups collectively control less than 5 percent of Syria. Landis writes that, according to opposition leaders, Washington is supporting about 75 of these groups.

A U.S. strategy of escalating airstrikes in Syria - even if coupled with ground forces - would wish that the weakest and most disorganized forces in the country somehow become the strongest, first defeating the Islamic State, then the Assad regime, all while fighting off Jabhat al-Nusra and Khorasan. The chance that all this will happen is remote. Far more likely, heavy bombings in Syria will produce chaos and instability on the ground, further destroying Syria and promoting the free-for-all in which jihadi groups thrive.

Critics are sure this policy would have been easy three years ago, when the opposition to Assad was more secular and democratic. This is a fantasy. It's true that the demonstrations against the Assad regime in the initial months seemed to be carried out by more secular and liberal people. This was also true in Libya and Egypt. But over time, more organized, passionate and religious forces triumphed. This is a familiar pattern in revolutions - including the French, Russian and Iranian. They are begun by liberals and taken over by radicals.

For any strategy to work in Syria, it needs both a military and a political component. The military element is weak. The political one is nonexistent.

The crucial, underlying reason for the violence in Iraq and Syria is a Sunni revolt against governments in Baghdad and Damascus that they view as hostile, apostate regimes. That revolt, in turn, has been fueled by Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Qatar, each supporting its own favorite Sunni groups, which has only added to the complexity. On the other side, Iran has supported the Shiite and Alawite regimes, ensuring that this sectarian struggle is also regional.

The political solution, presumably, is some kind of power-sharing arrangement in those two capitals. But this is not something that the United States can engineer in Syria. It tried in Iraq, but despite 170,000 troops, tens of billions of dollars and David Petraeus's skillful leadership, the deals

Petraeus brokered started unraveling within months of his departure, well before American troops had left. This is not a part of the world where power-sharing and pluralism have worked - with the exception of Lebanon, and that happened after a bloody 15-year civil war in which one out of every 20 people in the country was slaughtered.

The only strategy against the Islamic State that has any chance of working is containment - bolstering the neighbors (who are threatened far more than the United States) that are willing to fight militarily and politically. They include, most importantly, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey and the Gulf states. The greatest challenge is to get the Iraqi government to make serious concessions to Sunnis so that they are recruited into the fight, something that has not happened so far. All of this should be coupled with counterterrorism, which means strikes at key Islamic State targets, as well as measures to track foreign fighters, stop their movements, intercept their funds, and protect the neighbors and the West from a jihadi infiltration spilling over.

The Obama administration is pursuing many elements of this strategy. It should be forthright about its objectives and abandon its grander rhetoric, which is setting itself up for escalation and failure. Read more from Fareed Zakaria's archive, follow him on Twitter or subscribe to his updates on Facebook.

WILMINGTON NEWS JOURNAL STORIES:

DROPPING AETNA FROM MEDICAID MEANS JOB LOSSES (WILNJ)

By Jonathan Starkey

Wilmington (DE) News Journal, October 16, 2014

About two hundred Delaware-based healthcare jobs will be lost at the end of the year after the state department of Health and Social Services announced Wednesday it will no longer offer Medicaid coverage through one of its managed care organizations, Delaware Physicians Care Inc. Some employees working with Delaware Physicians Care, an Aetna health plan, will have opportunities to work in other plans in Maryland in Pennsylvania, said Aetna spokesman Walt Cherniak. But by Jan. 1, the 202 jobs associated with the Aetna plan will be gone.

"We're going to be talking to our employees on a one on one basis," Cherniak said. "There will be job reductions, it is just impossible to say right now how many there will be."

About 137,000 Delaware Medicaid patients are enrolled in an Aetna Delaware Physicians Care plan, meaning those patients will have to transfer over to a Highmark or United Healthcare plan when open enrollment begins Nov. 15. Currently, 54,000 Medicaid patients are enrolled in a United Healthcare plan.

Stephen Groff, director of the state's Medicaid program, said the Delaware Department of Health and Social Services will send out supplemental enrollment materials to educate Medicaid patients about their options and "reinforce that they have a choice."

"We'll be identifying those populations that perhaps have the greatest risk or transition needs," Groff said Thursday. "The bottom line is nothing ever goes perfectly and we realize that. It's just very important for people to understand if they have a concern or an issue they need to reach out to us."

Rita Landgraf, DHSS secretary, said the department was ready to move forward with three managed care organizations but financial negotiations failed with Aetna.

"We actually thought three carriers would be the appropriate level," Landgraf said. "Unfortunately at the end of the day we couldn't come to an agreement with Aetna."

About 230,000 Delawareans rely on Medicaid, an insurance program for low-income residents funded jointly by the federal and state governments. Roughly 200,000 of those patients get care through one of the managed care organizations. More than \$1.6 billion flows through the managed care system in Delaware.

Medicaid is one of the state's largest public expenses, costing state taxpayers about \$700 million annually.

President Obama's health care law expanded eligibility for the program up to 138 percent of the federal poverty level. More than 8,000 newly eligible Delawareans have enrolled since implementation of the expansion last year, and Landgraf expects that number to grow.

The federal government is picking up the vast majority of the cost for those new patients.

Landgraf acknowledged Thursday that dropping Aetna could mean short-term job losses, but suggested many of those workers in direct support roles could find new jobs. "Those jobs don't go away," Landgraf said. "The other carriers will need to get that level of personnel to support the population. So the jobs themselves don't go away. They just might not be part of that company. I thought that the Aetna team on the ground was exceptional." Those who choose United Healthcare plans could still be shut out of A.I. du Pont Hospital for Children after contract talks between Nemours and United Healthcare fell apart this spring. Parents of children requiring specialty care were urged to find new providers in Philadelphia or Baltimore. Contact Jonathan Starkey at 983-6756, on Twitter @jwstarkey or at jstarkey@delawareonline.com. Contact Jon Offredo at 678-4271, on Twitter @jonoffredo or at joffredo@delawareonline.com. Read or Share this story: ><http://delonline.us/1sYqNNO><

DELAWARE POLL: LEGALIZE MARIJUANA (WILNJ)

By Jonathan Starkey

Wilmington (DE) News Journal, October 16, 2014

Want legal weed in Delaware?

You're easily in the majority, according to a new University of Delaware poll that finds 56 percent of Delawareans support legalization of marijuana use.

The university polled 902 Delaware adults between Sept. 10 and 22, finding just 39 percent opposed to legalization. Delawareans older than 60 and self-identified conservatives were the only groups to express deep opposition, while young adults and liberals drove the support.

Support for legalization crossed racial and geographic boundaries, with poll respondents in all three counties saying they back legal marijuana.

"I would say the numbers suggest solid support for fully legalizing marijuana in Delaware," said Paul Brewer, the political communications professor at the University of Delaware who supervised the poll. "The results also reflect what's going on in public opinion at the national level, where the trends show a growing majority favoring legalization.

Only Colorado and Washington state have legalized marijuana, regulating and taxing sales. Sixteen other states and the District of Columbia have replaced criminal penalties with fines for those found in possession of small amounts of marijuana, a step known as decriminalization. Voters in several other states will consider ballot measures next month to loosen marijuana laws. Of course, public support does not always accurately predict political support. Gov. Jack Markell remains opposed to full legalization of the drug, a spokeswoman said on Thursday.

"Since last year, the governor and his office have been talking with legislators and others about decriminalizing the possession of a small amount of marijuana and replacing criminal penalties with civil fines," said Kelly Bachman, Markell's spokeswoman.

"While the governor would not support full legalization at this time without further studies and evidence of its consequences, he expects to have more conversations about reducing the criminal penalties on small amounts of marijuana in the months to come."

The poll does show a breakdown along generational and ideological lines.

Opposition to legal marijuana was most pronounced among Delawareans aged 60 or older. Just 36.9 percent of respondents in that age group favored legalization, while 68 percent younger than 30 supported the move.

Among respondents who identified as conservative, just 39.2 percent favored legalization. Among liberals, 73 percent said they think marijuana should be legal.

Across the rest of the poll, support is significant. Majorities of minorities and white Delawareans support legalization. Voters in all three counties support making the drug legal, though the margin is slim in Sussex County, Delaware's most conservative county.

In Sussex, 48 percent of respondents said they would support legalization, while 47.3 percent said they oppose the move.

"The poll just shows there is broad support for this," said Delaware Sen. Bryan Townsend, a Newark Democrat who favors legalization of marijuana. "I hope this is a wake-up call to the General Assembly that a majority of Delawareans support us moving in this direction."

Directing criminal justice resources to combat marijuana is a distraction to addressing more

problematic drug crimes and substance abuse.

"I think we should be focusing on addiction," Townsend said. "We should be focused on crime. We should be focused on community safety. Marijuana does not really seem to relate closely to any of those things."

Legislation introduced earlier this year by state Rep. Helene Keeley, of Wilmington would have allowed Delawareans to legally possess up to an ounce of marijuana for personal use, without regulating and taxing sales of the drug.

Facing political opposition, that bill was scrapped.

A House committee later passed separate legislation from Keeley that would have replaced criminal penalties with \$250 civil fines for anyone 21 or older in Delaware found in possession of an ounce or less of marijuana.

Current Delaware law prosecutes simple marijuana possession as a misdemeanor, punishable by fines of up to \$1,150 and up to six months in jail.

In 2013, Delaware police made 2,632 arrests for petty marijuana possession, charged as an unclassified misdemeanor, including 298 charges involving juveniles, according to the Delaware Criminal Justice Council's Statistical Analysis Center.

Keeley, who faces an opponent in November, said Thursday that if re-elected she intends to introduce a decriminalization bill when the General Assembly returns in January.

"The governor has said that he would not sign a legalization bill at this time," Keeley said. "I would still like to continue the dialogue. Even just decriminalization is a step in the right direction."

Lt. Gov. Matt Denn, the frontrunner to become Delaware's next attorney general is also in the camp opposed to legalization.

Denn said while he supports removing criminal penalties for possession, he can't get behind promoting use of the drug.

"I don't want our scarce criminal justice system resources being used to prosecute people for possession of small quantities of marijuana, but I do want my 9-year-old boys to understand that it is bad for them and they shouldn't use it," Denn said by email on Thursday.

Todd Kitchen, a marijuana user and legalization activist, said he is not surprised by broad support for legalization of the drug, despite the smaller steps being taken politically.

Kitchen helped push for the legalization of marijuana for medical purposes in 2011.

A 2005 car accident left Kitchen with traumatic brain injury, anxiety and severe back pain caused by a form of arthritis that he uses marijuana to soothe.

The state's first medical marijuana dispensary is scheduled to open early next year outside of Wilmington.

"A lot of people have been trying to change the attitude toward it and get out correct information to re-inform the public," said Kitchen, who says marijuana has a calming effect and leads to less violent behavior than alcohol.

The poll results, Kitchen said, shows "people are listening. They realize it's not as bad as they thought it was."

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M&T BANK ADVERTISING DECEPTIVE, AGENCY SAYS (WILNJ)

By Maureen Milford

Wilmington (DE) News Journal, October 16, 2014

At the same time M&T Bank of Buffalo deals with the fallout from its 2011 acquisition of Wilmington Trust Co., it has been hit with accusations of deceptive advertising from a checking account campaign.

The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau has taken action against the bank for luring customers with the promise of free checking accounts from 2009 to 2012 with advertisements such as "M&T Totally Free Checking No minimum Balance. No monthly service charge." The agency was established by the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act of 2010 to carry out federal consumer financial laws.

What the bank failed to disclose was that customers had to maintain a minimum level of deposits and withdrawals, according to the consent order. When consumers had no account activity for 90

days, the bank automatically converted the accounts to so-called M&T First accounts. The M&T First accounts carried a monthly maintenance fee of \$5 to \$14 unless the average account balance was more than \$1,500 or if the consumer's combined balances of checking, savings and deposits was more than \$1,500, the order says. The only notification that the accounts had been switched was when "M&T First" appeared on account documents, according to the agency. According to the order, M&T converted approximately 80,903 free checking accounts to M&T First accounts, and approximately 59,041 customers were charged fees. According to the order, M&T assessed approximately \$2.94 million in monthly maintenance fees on these converted accounts. It collected from approximately \$2.045 million of those fees from customers.

M&T has agreed to a consent order without admitting to the agency's findings. It has agreed to refund approximately \$2.045 million to affected customers and pay a \$200,000 civil penalty.

C. Michael Zabel, group vice president with M&T in Buffalo, said there is no impact on accounts acquired from the purchase of Wilmington Trust Co. in 2011 because M&T "did not advertise to them."

Darren J. King, M&T's executive vice president for retail and business banking, said more than two years ago, the consumer protection bureau changed the way certain rules and regulations were to be interpreted.

"And under that new interpretation, they indicated a concern about the way one of our checking products was marketed. We immediately changed our policies and procedures in response, and we have cooperated fully with their inquiry," King said. "The regulatory environment has evolved, and our policies and procedures have evolved as well, not just to meet the regulators' new expectations, but also to meet the highest expectations of our customers."

This latest action comes on the heels of a settlement reached last month with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission. Wilmington Trust reached an agreement to pay \$18.5 million to settle charges that it made false and misleading disclosures about its past-due loans over multiple quarters in 2009 and 2010.

Since 2013, Wilmington Trust has been embroiled in a criminal investigation by the U.S. Department of Justice that has led to six prosecutions. Three prosecutions involve former bank officials. In addition, shareholders have been pursuing a federal civil lawsuit against former Wilmington Trust directors and officers alleging they conspired to fraudulently conceal hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of past-due and non-performing loans.

Contact Maureen Milford at 302-324-2881 or mmilford@delawareonline.com.

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NEWS JOURNAL KEEPING NEEDS OF READERS IN MIND (WILNJ)

By David Ledford

Wilmington (DE) News Journal, October 16, 2014

We're reorganizing our news operation for the future - mindful that we've been privileged to serve Delaware daily since 1871 because our staff knows and cares about this state.

The realignment is necessary to meet the needs of more and more readers who consume news through digital channels. Delawareonline.com, easily the state's leading news web site, has enjoyed tremendous success, and we're restructuring our team to improve your experience on desktop, mobile and tablet.

In coming months we'll have more reporters working the state, and you'll see from them a greater sense of urgency. Their charge is to be more entrepreneurial in nature than in the past, depending as much on tips from readers as assignments from editors. So if you have an idea, or a slice of perspective you feel is missing from a story as initial reports roll onto delawareonline.com, please make your voice heard.

The News Journal stands on the bedrock of watchdog reporting, which we know from market surveys is the No. 1 priority of Delaware readers. I talk to readers almost every day and most recognize, as we do, that the success of our report is predicated on the quality of the ideas we pursue. Readers expect stories they can't get anywhere else, and they expect that work to be presented in innovative ways.

The two-day series we published last weekend, "Paladin Club Massacre," illustrates the way we'll present deep stories in the Newsroom of the Future.

It had a huge presence in Sunday and Monday editions of The News Journal and a magazine-like look at delawareonline.com's desktop, mobile and tablet platforms - with video, photographs and a graphic embedded among the chapters.

Before the work was posted online, reporter Cris Barrish alerted readers on Twitter and Facebook that it was coming. Once it was published, reader comments poured in.

So no matter how you consumed the content, our intent was to improve your experience.

That's the future. And we see our digital products getting more sophisticated.

We have a delawareonline.com app for the iPhone, an app for Android, an app for the iPad, and a brand new app for coverage of the Philadelphia Eagles.

If you're already a subscriber, you can also read our print edition online.

Speaking of subscribing, you can do so at delawareonline.com/subscribe.

The printed newspaper will continue to be delivered - and sold by vendors statewide - seven days a week. Yet as we restructure, you will notice better responsiveness to your ideas from reporters and editors. You'll get better community coverage. There's a new beat designed to chronicle solutions - the best ideas bubbling up from citizens and governments. There will be more energy on stories that have statewide impact and new focus on the creative ideas coursing through Delaware.

The professionals on our staff are looking at a range of new opportunities in our organization to help bring you this kind of journalism. To effect this change we have streamlined management and consolidated some production jobs. But we are breathing new life into the reporting ranks, ensuring that we continue to have far more boots on the ground than any other news organization statewide.

Again, our strength is our people - journalists who know and care deeply about Delaware.

Thank you, Delaware, for the trust you've placed in us the past 143 years. We view it as a privilege to continue daily delivering the news in a place we love.

David Ledford

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DELAWARE COLLEGES TO WAIVE APPLICATION FEES (WILNJ)

By Matthew Albright

Wilmington (DE) News Journal, October 16, 2014

Delaware's colleges will waive application fees for in-state students who apply during the state's College Application Month, which started this week and runs through Nov. 21.

Delaware Tech and Wilmington University have waived fees for students participating in the program for two years. They will be joined this year by the University of Delaware and Delaware State University, Gov. Jack Markell's office announced Thursday.

"I applaud our universities for working to make their admissions process as accessible and encouraging to our students as possible," Markell said in a statement. "With good jobs increasingly requiring education or training beyond high school, addressing obstacles to a college application is vital."

Students can apply to Wesley College and Goldey-Beacom College without charge, which means no Delaware senior will owe application fees to the state's six colleges and universities, Markell's office said.

This year, every high school in the state is participating in College Application Month, which allows students to apply for colleges during the school day.

State officials say the fee waivers are important because they often discourage students from low-income families from applying, even if those students have the potential to succeed once they enroll.

Students applying to UD should be sure to select "Yes, I participated in the UD Senior Search Program." Students applying to Delaware state should select "request a fee waiver" on the "submit and pay" screen."

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NO POLAR VORTEX IN NOAA WINTER FORECAST (WILNJ)

By Jeff Montgomery

Wilmington (DE) News Journal, October 16, 2014

Most of the nation is unlikely to see a repeat this winter of the polar vortex invasions that made for icy headaches through late 2013 and early this year, the nation's climate forecasters said Thursday.

"Last year we saw a very recurrent pattern with very persistent cold air outbreaks. At this point there's nothing that indicates we'll see a repeat of that," said Mike Halpert, acting director of the Climate Prediction Center in the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

"The likelihood that we'll see it as persistent as we saw it last year is fairly low," Halpert said.

Although some forecasting agencies have pointed to signs of a colder-than-average year, the Mid-Atlantic and east-central part of the country have an even chance of the season being colder or warmer than usual.

Much of California, meanwhile, faces continuation of an ongoing and historic drought, with dry conditions continuing into spring.

That contrasts with moderate expectations with above-average rainfall across the south and along the entire East Coast.

State College-based Accuweather recently predicted a colder-than-average winter and possibly more snow or rain than usual, an outlook partly related to expectations that water temperatures in the equatorial Pacific will warm and set up moderate El Niño conditions.

NOAA officials said Thursday that conditions are "flirting" with an El Niño, with only a weak pattern likely.

El Niño's effect on the Northeast's climate remains uncertain, however.

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PLAN FOR NEW DELAWARE CONTAINER PORT COULD CREATE 4,000 JOBS (WILNJ)

By Maureen Milford

Wilmington (DE) News Journal, October 16, 2014

An effort to expand the Port of Wilmington to a 176-acre site on the Delaware River in New Castle will move forward Friday with a public forum expected to reveal preliminary findings of a \$100,000 feasibility study.

Based on a draft of the study obtained by The News Journal, the proposed \$400 million to \$500 million development being pushed by the International Longshoremen's Association would be a viable option for keeping the port competitive for the next 50 years or more.

The study for the longshoremen by maritime advisory company Paul F. Richardson Associates Inc., says a privately financed port development in Riveredge Industrial Park just south of the Delaware Memorial Bridge would allow Delaware to compete for cargo with regional ports in New York/New Jersey, Baltimore and Norfolk, Va., and has the potential to create "vast employment opportunities."

"This project is critical to creating good-paying blue-collar jobs that will help restore the middle class in Delaware," said Ronald "Kimoko" Harris, business agent with International Longshoremen's Association Clerks and Checkers Local 1883, whose members work to load and unload cargo.

Harris estimates the project could create 4,000 new high-paying jobs. Longshoremen are among the highest-paid blue collar workers in the country, with some earning more than \$100,000 a year. The event to be held at the Sheraton Suites Wilmington Downtown Hotel will detail the mechanics of a development, according to Ed Zimny, a principal in Richardson Associates Inc., of Holmdel, N.J.

New Castle County Executive Tom Gordon, who has championed the project since returning to office, will also attend the 10 a.m. forum.

"It's a necessary project for Delaware to succeed and grow the middle class and reduce crime in Wilmington by giving people an opportunity to have livable wages," Gordon said.

The presentation will include a question and answer session designed to involve environmental groups, neighbors, labor and public officials. Information gathered from these "stakeholders" will be incorporated into a final report that is expected to be released in November or December.

An expanded port has been a vision of the longshoremen's locals 1883 and 1694 for about eight

years. The longshoremen have been concerned about the transformation of the shipping industry with the advent of a new global fleet of mega-ships that can carry almost double the containers of the previous generation of ships. The larger ships require larger, more modern terminals. These mega-vessels have a capacity of 7,500 to 12,000 container units as measured by the standard 20-foot container (TEU). By the end of 2016, there will be more than 770 container ships of over 7,500 TEU, compared to 628 ships today, according to HJ Tan of Alphaliner, a shipping research company in Singapore.

To handle these large cargo ships, port terminals need huge ship-to-shore gantry cranes on foundations able to support the heavier loads, Zimny said.

The existing Port of Wilmington doesn't handle vessels with a capacity much larger than 3,000 TEU, Zimny said.

The concept for Riveredge calls for a single large pier, or dock, at Riveredge with seven or more berths for ships, Harris said. With six or more large container cranes, the port could work on the larger container ships. According to Harris, container work is the highest-paying cargo for longshoremen.

The site, which has been owned by Parkway Gravel for 20 years, has enough space to accommodate warehouses. The Gordon administration also envisions capitalizing on the existing rail line near the properties to tie the Riveredge operation with the Port of Wilmington and the former General Motors assembly plant on Boxwood Road near Newport.

The Boxwood location, the former Fisker Automotive site that the county has offered to buy, would serve as a central location for the distribution to retailers of goods and products by rail or highway. Access to I-295 is right outside Riveredge Industrial Park. The plan calls for the rail line that runs through Riveredge to be connected to the Port of Wilmington. The rail system at the Port of Wilmington connects to the Boxwood Road plant, connecting all three sites by rail.

The concept envisions a public-private partnership that would likely have a long-term arrangement between a public port authority and a private company. The private company would develop and operate the port for 30 years or more, the draft of the study says.

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176: Number of acres a new port would cover.

\$400 million: Estimated cost of the project.

4,000: Estimated jobs the port would create.

7: Number of ship berths handling biggest container ships.

Read or Share this story: <http://delonline.us/1sYjpSu>

STRINE APPOINTS PANEL TO REVIEW COURT SYSTEM (WILNJ)

By Sean O'Sullivan

Wilmington (DE) News Journal, October 16, 2014

WILMINGTON - Following through on his State of the Judiciary address in June, Delaware Supreme Court Chief Justice Leo Strine Wednesday released a 12-page administrative directive that aims to review, and potentially reshape and downsize significantly, parts of the state's court system.

In short, the directive calls for the creation of a new panel to review the effectiveness and efficiency of the "specialty" or "problem-solving courts" and if the courts "warrant continuation."

The panel, which is made up of judges and is supposed to report back by June, also has been charged with identifying means "to consolidate, eliminate or revise the mandate" of more than a dozen criminal justice policy organizations like Sentencing Accountability Commission, the Criminal Justice Council and the Criminal Justice Reinvestment Oversight Group.

The directive notes, as Strine did in June, that some of these groups have overlapping or inconsistent mandates.

Strine said this effort is "a positive thing." And while supporters of the specialty courts - that include drug court, mental health court and the veterans' court - were concerned by Strine's comments in June, he said that was like people who get an "A-" and focus on the minus.

The specialty courts often give defendants who meet certain criteria a chance to resolve their charges pre-trial - and avoid conviction - if they agree to therapy or treatment.

Strine said he supports the idea of these courts "but what we are talking about is using taxpayers' resources and the resources of our partners (like Probation and Parole) more efficiently."

The chief judge said the goal of the review is not to eliminate the courts but to evaluate, modernize, streamline and ultimately better codify them so they become more a matter of "law not lore" and ensure that the gut feelings of people who support such courts are backed up with data. Right now some of the specialty courts operate differently in different counties. The drug court, for example, is overseen by a court commissioner in Sussex County but it is overseen by a judge in New Castle and Kent counties. The Strine directive calls for the panel to "develop statewide standards, rules of procedure and outcome measures to govern their operation and measure their performance."

Strine added that the specialty courts should perhaps operate in a more cooperative way. A defendant in drug court may also be a veteran. A person with mental health issues may also have substance abuse issues. And some people in veterans' court may have both drug and mental illness issues.

Strine acknowledges that it is somewhat ironic that in order to pare down what he sees as overlapping and inconsistent functions he has created a new committee - The Criminal Justice Council of the Judiciary, made up of 15 state court judges - but he sees the committee as a necessary vehicle to get the job done.

New Castle County Superior Court Judge William C. Carpenter Jr. will head this new review committee along with Superior Court Judge Jan R. Jurden, who spearheaded creation of the mental health court and served on the veterans court in New Castle County. Superior Court Judge William L. Witham Jr., who founded the veterans court in Delaware, is also on the committee.

Strine said he hopes the end result of the process - hard data about the effectiveness of programs and specialty courts - also will help the court system make more persuasive arguments when the court goes to the legislature to seek additional funding.

At the same time, Strine made it clear he expects to find cost savings through the review process. One issue, however, may be that some of the policy committees that Strine is looking to consolidate may have been established by the legislature, governor or federal mandates.

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WHITE HOUSE OFFICIAL VISITS, LAUDS PRESTIGE ACADEMY (WILNJ)

By Matthew Albright

Wilmington (DE) News Journal, October 16, 2014

David Johns stood in the middle of the cafeteria at Prestige Academy Charter School in Wilmington and had the students repeat after him.

"I am brilliant. I am beautiful," they shouted. "I am resilient. I can be anything I choose to."

There are few more places Johns, executive director of the White House Initiative on Education Excellence for African Americans, could have visited. He is crossing the country spreading the word about My Brother's Keeper, President Barack Obama's effort to improve education and workforce training for young black men.

Prestige is Delaware's only public all-boys school, serving almost entirely low-income minority students.

"This is the only school in the state that is unapologetically and intentionally focusing on young men of color," Johns said.

Delaware's black students, like the rest of the country, face more than their share of educational problems.

Even as the state brought its dropout rate to a 30-year low last year, black students still faced a 4 percent annual dropout rate, almost twice that of white students.

Only 59 percent of black students scored "proficient" in reading on the state's standardized test last year, compared to 82 percent of white students, and only 54 percent scored proficient in math, compared to 84 percent of white students.

The problems are especially acute for black male students, who are much more likely to be shooting victims and face prison time and other social problems that derail their potential.

Started in January, My Brother's Keeper is the Obama administration's call to find models around the country for ways to break this cycle for young black men. The program calls for community members to step up as mentors and advocate for those students.

"I know you guys encounter things on the way to school that would cause even some adults to say 'I quit,' " Johns told the students. "But if you hear me say nothing else, hear me say I'm proud of you. And we as a country need to do a better job supporting you."

Johns took questions from the students and teachers, which ranged from what it was like to work in the White House to what the administration was doing to lower the number of black teens shot and killed by police officers.

Jack Perry, the school's executive director, encouraged students to ask Johns tough questions and give him their honest opinions.

"No other young men can speak about your situation better than you can," he said.

Johns visited Wilmington on his way to a national educational summit in Philadelphia. He came at the request of City Councilman Darius Brown, whose son attends Prestige.

"We are making great strides toward equitable urban education," Brown said. "But there is more we need to do before we have truly great learning neighborhoods."

Johns praised the students for their sharp attire.

"Next time the president needs help with his tie, I know who to send him to," he said.

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Read or Share this story: ><http://delonline.us/1sYmOAT><

COMING SOON: LOW-DIGIT SURF FISHING TAGS (WILNJ)

By Jeff Montgomery

Wilmington (DE) News Journal, October 16, 2014

For the surf-caster with everything but a trophy catch, Delaware's surf-fishing program soon will offer some bragging rights consolation: Trophy Tags.

Gov. Jack Markell signed legislation Thursday authorizing the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control to sell or auction 1,000 low-digit plates for surf-fishing vehicles.

State officials said the affinity plate sales - inspired by longstanding interest in low-digit auto tags - will raise money for Division of Parks and Recreation operations and maintenance, especially at ocean parks. The state park system discontinued sale of numbered tags in 1994, but collectors and fishing enthusiasts have shown continuing interest.

"This legislation has the potential to be a strong revenue source to benefit our state parks," Gov. Jack Markell said in written remarks.

"This year, more than 14,000 surf tags were sold, generating about \$1.3 million for our state parks. So not only is this legislation a revenue-raiser for our parks, it appeals to parks users who have an affinity for low digit tags - and we in Delaware know that will appeal to a large number of potential buyers."

Delaware's low-digit tag culture peaked in 2008, when motor vehicle tag No. 6 sold for an astonishing \$675,000 at auction.

Under the surf fishing tag program - expected to begin by Memorial Day 2015 - state parks officials will conduct a live, annual auction during the spring or early summer for a limited number of tags.

An online auction will follow allowing bids on up to 100 tags at a time. Non-numbered tags will continue to be available, however.

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WILMINGTON DEFINES POSSIBLE DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT (WILNJ)

By Yann Ranaivo

Wilmington (DE) News Journal, October 16, 2014

Wilmington officials want a 223-acre area that spans parts of downtown and nearby neighborhoods on the west and east sides to receive a state designation expected to spur revitalization of urban blocks.

The city's application for the state's new Downtown Development District initiative shows that city leaders are targeting significant redevelopment in an area that is roughly bounded by Locust, 11th, Fourth and Adams streets. The southernmost part of the district includes a small area that juts out between Shipley, King and Second streets.

Wilmington has until Nov. 1 to submit its application to the state, but City Council on Thursday

voted 11-0 for a resolution backing the plan.

"I think it's appropriate," Council President Theo Gregory said. "I think it was inclusive."

Planning and development Director Leonard Sophrin said the proposed area was drawn with the idea of improving pedestrian traffic among downtown and the adjacent neighborhoods. Projects in the district, which could be residential, commercial or mixed use, would keep people in the city after the typical 5 p.m. work day.

"We are looking to bring the neighborhood and downtown life together. They had to be connected," Sophrin said. "We are rebuilding the relationship between neighborhoods and downtown itself."

The state's budget this year includes \$7 million to revitalize downtown areas. The state will select one community in each county for the initial designations.

The designation allows projects in the Downtown Development Districts to become eligible for some state reimbursements and a variety of local incentive packages.

Sophrin said the incentives and reimbursements could create cost savings that allow developers to take on more projects, whether they be in the district itself or elsewhere in the city.

"This is a pilot in many ways," he said.

Gregory said he likes the proposed designated area because it is comprised of blocks that are socioeconomically and ethnically diverse.

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Read or Share this story: ><http://delonline.us/1wa4rYI><

WILMINGTON JOURNAL NEWS EDITORIALS:

GOALS SHOULD BE TO IMPROVE COURTS (WILNJ)

Wilmington (DE) News Journal, October 16, 2014

Delaware Supreme Court Chief Justice Leo E. Strine Jr. clearly telegraphed his intentions, but his action Thursday took a number of court observers by surprise.

Chief Justice Strine issued an order to create a panel that would take a close look at what are called "problem-solving courts." These include drug, mental health, re-entry and veterans courts. They are designed to do what the unofficial name implies - to solve problems rather than to dispense harsh justice. He foreshadowed the move in his state of the judiciary address earlier this year.

The chief justice wants his special "Criminal Justice Council of the Judiciary" to examine the effectiveness of these courts and to develop rules of procedures, as well as consistent standards. He also wants the council to help determine which of these courts "warrant continuation." That means the panel should decide which specialty court should be kept open and which should be closed. This last idea sent shudders down the spines of some supporters of the courts.

However, we should take the chief justice at his word and support the council's examination of the courts. Several of these courts have won public recognition for keeping minor offenders out of jail and for steering drug users, for example, to rehabilitation. It does not make sense to put people who are mostly wrecking their own lives in prison when they could be steered to other paths.

It would be good to know how effective the courts are, whether they are actually doing what they were intended to do and whether they are operating efficiently. For example, as the chief justice pointed out in his directive, an offender could end up in both drug and veterans courts. Chief Justice Strine asked whether it would be better to make sure only one court handles the case. The chief justice, in his directive, said the goal is "identify which of the so-called 'problem-solving courts' have demonstrated sufficient utility in terms of public safety, the rehabilitation of offenders and the efficient of the judicial system to warrant continuation."

We believe that "problem-solving courts" make sense. However, they have developed rapidly over the past two decades and now exist in every state. The forms they take and the outcomes they bring about vary widely. Standards may sound like an innovation-squelching idea, but this is a justice system we are talking about. Much is at risk, not only for society, but also for the offenders in court.

Legal experts around the country have begun to question these very things. Critics have called it a

"custom justice" system.

Chief Justice Strine's examining committee could put those questions and criticisms to rest. We believe that the Delaware "problem-solving courts" actually have solved problems and kept people out of jail. The job should be to make them more effective.

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VICE PRESIDENTIAL *NEWS CLIPS*

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TO: THE VICE PRESIDENT AND STAFF
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BIDEN IN THE NEWS

Biden Touts Infrastructure Work In Philadelphia

[Associated Press](#), October 16, 2014

PHILADELPHIA — Investing in the country's infrastructure is needed for the kind of jobs workers can "raise a middle class family on," Vice President Joe **Biden** said during a trip to Philadelphia on Thursday.

Biden toured a dredging barge being used in a 102.5-mile project to deepen a shipping channel that stretches from the Ben Franklin Bridge to the Delaware Bay and is meant to bring larger container ships to the port.

Such infrastructure enhancements are "what we desperately need in this country now" to promote manufacturing and jobs, **Biden** said.

"Where's it written that the United States will not be the manufacturing capital of the world in the 21st century?" **Biden** asked a small crowd gathered in front of the barge. "Manufacturing is coming home for the United States."

The \$300 million project would deepen the 40-foot Delaware River channel to 45 feet. It started in March 2010, but work on the 2.5-mile section in Philadelphia just started last month. Officials are aiming to complete the entire deepening in 2017.

The 40-foot channel "cuts us out of a whole lot of commerce. It cuts us out of a whole lot of new jobs if they cannot come up the Delaware River," **Biden** said. "We can't afford to be left out of this. The dredging project here is going to have a profound economic impact when it's finished."

The project would add jobs and increase construction along the river, he said.

"The average person rides over the (Ben Franklin Bridge) and they look down and they have, understandably, no idea how much of their economic well-being depends on what happens at this port," **Biden** said. "We need this work, we need this port."

Biden was joined by U.S. Sen. Bob Casey and U.S. Reps. Chaka Fattah and Bob Brady, all Pennsylvania Democrats.

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Biden In Phila. To Promote Port, Dredging

By Chris Palmer

[Philadelphia Inquirer](#), October 17, 2014

Vice President **Biden** toured a dredging barge at Penn's Landing on Thursday to show support for the project to deepen the Delaware River shipping channel.

Biden, the latest high-profile politician to visit the region in recent days, was flanked by a phalanx of Pennsylvania Democrats – U.S. Sen. Robert P. Casey Jr., and U.S. Reps. Robert A. Brady and Chaka Fattah.

Before delivering remarks on the ongoing deepening of the Delaware, **Biden** and the delegation were taken on a tour of the large barge by Brian Puckett, project manager for Great Lakes Dredging & Dock Co.

The vessel's main feature, a dredging bucket that can haul as much as two dump trucks, immediately caught **Biden's** eye.

"That's a hell of a bucket," the vice president said after walking a gangplank onto the ship.

Biden's visit was to highlight the project, which aims to deepen about 100 miles of the waterway between the Delaware Bay and Philadelphia.

Initiated in March 2010, the project could be completed in 2017, according to Ed Voigt, a spokesman for the Army Corps of Engineers.

Biden noted that the effort will allow larger container ships to travel the river, which he called essential for economic development.

"We need this work," he said. "We need this port."

Biden said Brady has been an enthusiastic advocate for the project – even calling his cellphone while **Biden** was on a trip to Germany.

President Obama has proposed \$35 million for the project in his 2015 fiscal budget. The overall cost for the multiyear deepening will likely be around \$300 million, Voigt said.

Biden said the project will not only keep the Philadelphia port competitive, but will help support middle-class jobs and extend the legacy of the waterway.

"The Delaware River has been the heart of commerce for this valley for 300 years," he said.

Michelle Obama and Hillary Clinton each visited Philadelphia to campaign for Democratic gubernatorial candidate Tom Wolf, and New Jersey Gov. Christie stopped at Valley Forge Military Academy and College last week to stump for a fellow Republican, Gov. Corbett.

President Obama is also expected to campaign for Wolf in Philadelphia before the Nov. 4 election.
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Biden Barges In: VP Visits Philly Waterway

[NBC News](#), October 17, 2014

Vice President Joe **Biden** toured a dredging barge with Great Lakes Dredge & Dock members on Thursday, at Penn's Landing along the Delaware River in Philadelphia. **Biden** discussed the importance of investing in the nation's infrastructure during his visit to the waterfront.

VP Biden Visits Philadelphia To Check Progress Of Delaware River Dredging Project « CBS Philly

By Mike DeNardo

[KYW-TV Philadelphia](#), October 16, 2014

PHILADELPHIA (CBS) — Vice president Joe **Biden** toured a dredge boat along the Delaware riverfront today, to promote the ongoing project to deepen the river's shipping channel.

Biden said the dredging project to deepen the Delaware River channel to 45 feet has to continue if the Port of Philadelphia is to remain competitive.

In his speech at Penn's Landing, **Biden** said 135,000 area jobs are directly and indirectly linked to the ability of ships to navigate the Delaware.

Until the project is completed, **Biden** says, Philadelphia will lose some business:

"It cuts us out of a whole lot of commerce — cuts us out of a whole lot of good jobs if they cannot come up the Delaware River."

The dredging job, already more than halfway finished, needs 76 million federal dollars over the next two fiscal years.

Project manager Brian Puckett, of the Illinois-based Great Lakes Dredge and Dock Company, says that would be money well spent.

"It's absolutely imperative for our economy," Puckett said today.

VP Joe Biden Visits Penn's Landing

[WCAU-TV Philadelphia](#), October 17, 2014

Vice President and Delaware-native just landed in the city of Brotherly Love. He'll address the public on the importance of improving infrastructure.

Biden Speaks On Infrastructure In Philadelphia

[WPVI-TV Philadelphia](#), October 17, 2014

Vice President Joe **Biden** says investing in the country's infrastructure is needed to support what he called "good paying jobs you can raise a middle class family on."

Biden Travels To Burlington County For Belgard Fundraiser

By David Levinsky

[Burlington County \(NJ\) Times](#), October 16, 2014

MAPLE SHADE — Vice President Joe **Biden** paid a visit to Burlington County on Thursday to lend some fundraising help to Democrat Aimee Belgard's 3rd Congressional District campaign.

Biden headlined a private fundraiser for Belgard at Sensational Host caterers on Route 73. The event was closed to the press, but the Democrat's campaign released a statement from the Burlington County freeholder and a photo from the event.

"I'm thrilled that Vice President **Biden** visited Burlington County today to support my congressional campaign," Belgard said in the statement. "His leadership and support were really inspiring to our supporters as we are less than three weeks from Election Day. Our campaign, which is one of the most competitive in the country, has great momentum with our strong fundraising quarter, tremendous grassroots support and it was further bolstered today by Vice President **Biden's** strong commitment to join us in our fight for middle-class families."

Belgard is running against Republican Tom MacArthur for the open seat of Rep. Jon Runyan in the 3rd District, which is made up of almost all of Burlington County and a large portion of Ocean County.

The race was picked early on to become one of the most competitive House contests in the nation and one of the best pickup opportunities for Democrats to flip a seat to their column.

But a poll released Tuesday by Monmouth University gave MacArthur, a former insurance CEO, a 10-point edge among likely voters with another 6 percent still undecided.

Campaign finance reports submitted to the Federal Election Commission on Wednesday showed Belgard had raised more than \$1.4 million as of Sept. 30, but her campaign was still being outspent by MacArthur thanks in large part to \$4 million in loans the Republican made to his own campaign.

The Democratic Congressional Campaign also has spent more than \$1.2 million on cable television advertisements attacking MacArthur and his former company, York Risk Services.

Belgard's campaign did not release the amount of money raised at Thursday's event.

The Burlington County freeholder previously has received fundraising help from House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi as well as New Jersey U.S. Sen. Cory Booker.

Biden's visit came the day after President Barack Obama was scheduled to travel to New Jersey for a private Democratic fundraiser in Union County. Obama canceled the trip in order to meet with his cabinet to coordinate a response to the domestic Ebola crisis.

First Lady, VP To Stump For Minnesota Democratic Candidates

By Kevin Jacobsen

[KBJR-TV Duluth \(MN\)](#), October 17, 2014

St. Paul, MN (NNCNOW.com) – Several of Minnesota's Democratic candidates are expected to get some big name support next week.

Michelle Obama will make a stop in the Twin Cities during the week stumping for Senator Al Franken and Governor Mark Dayton.

On Thursday, Vice President Joe **Biden** will travel to Hibbing for a rally to help Representative Rick Nolan.

Just last Friday, Former President Bill Clinton was in Minnesota to lend his support to Gov. Dayton and Sen. Franken.

New Jersey Governor Chris Christie, meanwhile, campaigned with Minnesota's Republican Gubernatorial candidate, Jeff Johnson on Monday.

Biden Will Head To Boston

By Allison Sonfist

[NECN-TV Boston](#), October 17, 2014

Vice President Joe **Biden** will be at two fundraisers in Boston, Massachusetts, later this month.

One will be for Martha Coakley's gubernatorial bid. The other is for the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee.

Meanwhile, Coakley is hoping her campaign will get a boost from a visit by former President Bill Clinton. Clinton is scheduled to be at Clark University in Worcester on Thursday.

President Barack Obama has endorsed Democrat Gina Raimondo for Rhode Island governor. Late Wednesday, the White House, however, announced Obama was canceling Thursday trips to Rhode Island and New York to monitor the government's Ebola response.

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The Vice President Has Nothing To Apologize For

By Alfonse D'Amato

[Long Island \(NY\) Herald](#), October 17, 2014

The vice president has nothing to apologize for

Nassau County's source for local news, breaking news, school district updates sports, entertainment and shopping

Vice President Joseph **Biden** has been wrongly forced to embark on a Middle East apology tour in the wake of statements he made regarding the U.S.'s allies in the Middle East.

The vice president's troubles began a couple of weeks ago, during a question-and-answer session at Harvard University. He stated that the biggest problem the U.S. faces in the region, in dealing with Syria and the rise of ISIS, is our allies.

"They poured hundreds of millions of dollars and thousands of tons of weapons into anyone who would fight against Assad," **Biden** said, referring to Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, "except that the people who were being supplied were Al Nusra and Al Qaeda and the extremist elements of jihadists coming from other parts of the world."

The vice president stated the facts. This is what the Turks, Saudis and Emirates did — they armed the enemy. Turkey's porous borders have allowed thousands of terrorist militants to cross into Syrian and Iraqi battlefields. Even with the Islamic State taking control of Kobani, a Syrian town right on the Turkish border, Turkish troops watched through a chicken-wire fence.

Turkey's president, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, will not make a firm military commitment to the U.S., and refuses to send troops across the border as massacres are taking place less than a mile away. This is how one of our allies is supposed to act?

After apologizing to Turkey, **Biden** was then forced to issue the same apology to Saudi Arabia. Imagine that. After stating the obvious, that Turkey has allowed foreign fighters to cross into Syria, **Biden** said that Turkey, the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia had funneled weapons and other aid to extremist groups.

Remind me, what's wrong this statement? It was nothing but the truth.

While Saudi Arabia and the UAE take part in airstrikes against the militants in Syria, they also use U.S. arms and protection to nurture, protect and finance terrorist organizations.

There's no doubt in my mind that the Saudis are playing this game two ways. As our men and women risk their lives overseas to stop the brutality taking place in Syria and Iraq, the Saudis continue to aid and abet terrorist organizations.

The media should be ashamed for the way they jumped all over **Biden**. This was no gaffe. He never should have had to apologize, and this latest media hoopla has turned political correctness to hypocrisy. If anyone owes anyone an apology, it is our government, which should be apologizing to the public for not using our power and clout to force our allies to truly combat terrorism.

Erdogan, our supposed ally, tells us that he refuses to send in ground troops because a no-fly zone has not been set up in Syria. This comes at a time when ISIS is expanding its control over Syria less than a mile from his border. Despite the fact that there were 19 U.S.-led airstrikes, ISIS militants continue to gain control of Kobani. As the brutal battle rages on, Turkey continues to sit and watch, because Erdogan believes that the U.S. should be fighting Assad's forces with the same strength and energy as it is combating ISIS.

What kind of ally refuses to play its part, and allows a major threat to America's national security to gain more ground? Mr. Vice President, politics may have forced you to apologize, but Americans should know about the duplicity of our so-called allies.

Meanwhile, the Ebola virus has claimed its first victims in the U.S. Why has there not been more action from the Obama administration?

A carrier of the virus may not show symptoms for up to 21 days, meaning that even someone who appears to be healthy could be spreading the virus. This is a great threat to the New York area, considering that John F. Kennedy International Airport is one of five airports used by a majority of people who fly to the U.S. from West Africa.

The airport screening is playing Russian roulette, and nothing more than a ploy to placate the legitimate concerns of the American public. No one should be permitted to come here from those countries in West Africa where the Ebola epidemic is rampant.

Al DAmato, a former U.S. senator from New York, is the founder of Park Strategies LLC, a public policy and business development firm. Comments about this column? ADAmato@liherald.com.

An Early Look At Joe Biden And Mariska Hargitay's New Domestic Violence Campaign

By Alyssa Rosenberg

[Washington Post](#), October 16, 2014

The USA Network is well known for its so-called “blue sky” series. USA shows are set in locations with great weather, such as Miami and the Hamptons, and feature exceedingly good-looking (and diverse) casts bantering and displaying high levels of competence. But these sunny exteriors have more serious underpinnings.

Broadcast networks have tried to diversify their casts in recent seasons, recognizing that characters of color and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) characters who get to have relationships can be a significant audience draw. They are latecomers to the strategy, though: USA (and the CW, another smart, under-covered network) has been working at becoming more representative for years. Five USA series have regular or recurring LGBT characters (two of those series have non-white LGBT characters). Six have significant characters of color.

Showrunners on USA Network shows also often meet with people who work in the field, whether at advocacy groups such as the NAACP and GLAAD or the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. This is hardly uncommon practice, though networks do not usually take pains to explain to viewers what parts of their favorite shows were inspired by real-life conversations. USA frequently does so in public service announcements that air during the relevant broadcasts.

The network even recruited President Obama to tape an introduction to “To Kill a Mockingbird” when USA re-aired the classic courtroom drama, and former President Bill Clinton shot a similar spot for “Philadelphia.”

USA's latest get is Vice President Joe **Biden**, who draws on his experience drafting the Violence Against Women Act, which became law in 1994, for a PSA series with “Law & Order: Special Victims Unit” star Mariska Hargitay, which will air during a marathon of that series this weekend. The network gave me an early look at one of the three spots that will be part of the campaign to share with you:

Maile Zambuto, chief executive of Joyful Heart, Hargitay's foundation for survivors of sexual assault, domestic violence and child abuse, helped pick the episodes that will be airing in the marathon, which is pegged to the No More campaign. **Biden** and Hargitay are wearing No More buttons in their PSA.

“Selecting episodes for the marathon was a collaborative process,” Zambuto wrote in an e-mail. “Mariska, the NO MORE team, USA Network, writers and producers worked together to identify episodes that speak to different aspects of these issues—teen dating violence, campus sexual assault, male sexual abuse, the cycle of violence.”

The hope is that survivors recognize that they are not alone — and that the people who might be in a position to help victims of such violence recognize abuse and assault for what they are.

“Domestic violence is never the victim's fault,” **Biden** says in the PSA. After a fall dominated by coverage of Ray Rice's assault on the woman who is now his wife, during which the Baltimore Ravens tried to paint the altercation as a fight between equals, that message is one worth broadcasting loudly, and not just to hard-core “Law & Order: SVU” fans.

Joe Biden And Mariska Hargitay Team Up Against Campus Rape

[People](#), October 17, 2014

In this season of college homecomings coinciding with Domestic Violence Awareness Month, Vice President Joe **Biden** and Law & Order: SVU star Mariska Hargitay have teamed up to tell victims of campus sexual assault that the powerful duo has got their backs.

“Know that it’s not your fault and you’re definitely not alone,” Hargitay says in a new public-service announcement debuting Sunday during USA Network’s SVU marathon.

“We stand with you,” adds **Biden**, “because one is too many.”

The video, produced for the NO MORE movement by Hargitay’s Joyful Heart Foundation, is just the latest in a string of costarring roles for **Biden** and Hargitay, who share a commitment to combatting abuse of women.

“Joe **Biden** started the Violence Against Women Act 20 years ago and he was truly a visionary,” Hargitay told David Letterman earlier this month. “Our missions are aligned and we have come together and done a bunch of work.”

That included flying on Air Force Two – “a huge thrill for me,” she says – to visit the National Domestic Violence Hotline headquarters in Texas last year.

“The crimes on Law & Order: SVU are sometimes fictionalized,” Hargitay says in the PSA. “But sexual violence on college and university campuses is all-too real. And we cannot stand by while it happens.”

“It’s time,” says **Biden**, “for all of us to speak up and end sexual assault.”

Jill Biden To Campaign For Nunn In Georgia

By Justin Sink

[The Hill](#), October 17, 2014

Second lady Jill **Biden** is heading to Georgia on Friday for a series of fundraisers and campaign events for Democratic Senate candidate Michelle Nunn.

Polls show Nunn gaining momentum in her race against GOP businessman David Perdue to replace retiring Sen. Saxby Chambliss (R).

Biden will attend three fundraisers during her two-day stint in Atlanta: an event for the Democratic National Committee and two that directly benefit Nunn’s Senate campaign. The second lady and Nunn will also appear together at a community service event at the Fort Street United Methodist Church.

With the president’s approval ratings sinking to record lows, Democrats have relied on other administration officials — including the Bidens and first lady Michelle Obama — to shoulder the brunt of campaign activities, especially in toss-up districts.

Georgia represents one of the party’s best opportunities to take a seat from Republican control. A pair of polls from WRBL and SurveyUSA released this week have shown Nunn with a small lead over Perdue.

But Nunn has worked to distance herself from the president. Earlier this week, she refused to answer when a tracker from Republican research group Rising Response tried to ask if she had voted for President Obama.

Jill Biden to raise money for, campaign with Michelle Nunn

By Daniel Malloy

[Atlanta Journal-Constitution](#), October 16, 2014

Dr. Jill **Biden**, wife of Vice President Joe **Biden**, is headed to Atlanta on Friday to raise money for the party and Democratic U.S. Senate hopeful Michelle Nunn. The two also will appear at a community service-themed event.

Here's the itinerary the White House just sent over:

[Friday] evening, Dr. **Biden** will attend an event for the Democratic National Committee at a private residence [in Atlanta]. This event is closed press.

On Saturday, Dr. **Biden** will attend the Hands On Atlanta event with Michelle Nunn at the Fort Street United Methodist Church. Dr. **Biden**'s remarks at 9:00 AM are open press.

At 11:30 AM, Dr. **Biden** will attend an event for Michelle Nunn at a private residence. This event is closed press.

At 3:30 PM, Dr. **Biden** will attend an event for Michelle Nunn at The Sound Table. This event is closed press.

Joe **Biden** appeared with Nunn earlier this year, as did First Lady Michelle Obama. We don't expect to see the fourth member of the quartet, President Barack Obama, at her side.

Biden's Son Hunter Discharged From Navy Reserve After Failing Cocaine Test Lawyer Pursued Military Service Relatively Late as a Public-Affairs Officer

By Colleen McCain Nelson And Julian E. Barnes

[Wall Street Journal](#), October 17, 2014

Full-text stories from the Wall Street Journal are available to Journal subscribers by clicking the link.

Biden's Son 'Embarrassed' Over Navy Ouster

By Helene Cooper

[New York Times](#), October 17, 2014

WASHINGTON — Hunter **Biden**, the younger son of Vice President Joseph R. **Biden** Jr., failed a drug test and was discharged this year from the Navy Reserve, people familiar with the matter said on Thursday.

Mr. **Biden**, 44, tested positive for cocaine, those people said.

In a statement provided by his lawyer, Thomas M. Gallagher, Mr. **Biden** said that he was "embarrassed that my actions led to my administrative discharge." He added that he respected the Navy's decision.

Mr. **Biden** was commissioned as an ensign on May 7, 2013, and assigned to a public affairs reserve unit in Norfolk, Va.

He called it "the honor of my life to serve in the U.S. Navy," adding "I deeply regret" the actions that led to being discharged. "With the love and support of my family, I'm moving forward," he said in the statement.

A person close to the decision said that Mr. **Biden** was not treated differently from any other Navy Reserve sailor.

Mr. **Biden** was tested for drugs in June 2013, after he reported to his unit in Norfolk, and the result was positive for cocaine, according to the people familiar with the matter. The Navy said he was discharged in February.

It was unclear why Mr. **Biden** decided to join the Navy Reserve while in his 40s. He needed a waiver because of his age. He received a second waiver because of a drug-related incident when he was young, said the people familiar with his discharge, which was first reported in The Wall Street Journal.

Mr. **Biden**'s brother, Beau **Biden**, served in the Delaware Army National Guard and was deployed to Iraq for a year. Beau **Biden** now serves as the Delaware attorney general and plans to run for governor in 2016.

Hunter **Biden**, who is married with two children, is a lawyer and a partner at Rosemont Seneca Partners, an investment company. In May, he was appointed to the board of Burisma Holdings, a Ukrainian energy company.

Mr. **Biden**'s mother and his younger sister were killed in an automobile accident in 1972, in which he and his brother were seriously injured.

Biden's Son 'Embarrassed' By Discharge From Navy After Drug Test

By Ryan Parker

[Los Angeles Times](#), October 17, 2014

Hunter **Biden**, son of Vice President Joe **Biden**, said Thursday night that he was embarrassed by the Navy Reserve's decision to discharge him, which the Navy reportedly did because he tested positive for cocaine.

He was discharged in February after testing positive in June 2013, one month after being commissioned as an ensign, according to a source familiar with the situation, ABC News reported.

In a statement to the Los Angeles Times, **Biden**, 44, said he was trying to move on with his life.

"It was the honor of my life to serve in the U.S. Navy, and I deeply regret and am embarrassed that my actions led to my administrative discharge," **Biden** said. "I respect the Navy's decision. With the love and support of my family, I'm moving forward."

Neither Hunter **Biden** nor his attorney had additional comments.

Hunter **Biden**, an attorney and managing partner of the investment firm Rosemont Seneca Partners, is the second son of the vice president. His brother, Beau **Biden**, is the Delaware attorney general.

The vice president's office declined to comment on Hunter **Biden**'s situation.

Follow Ryan Parker for breaking news at @theryanparker and on Facebook.

Biden's Son Discharged From Navy Reserve

By David Jackson

[USA Today](#), October 17, 2014

Hunter **Biden**, the son of the vice president, was discharged from the Navy Reserve this year after testing positive for cocaine, The Wall Street Journal reported Thursday.

"It was the honor of my life to serve in the U.S. Navy, and I deeply regret and am embarrassed that my actions led to my administrative discharge," the younger **Biden** said in a statement released by his attorney.

"I respect the Navy's decision," **Biden** said. "With the love and support of my family, I'm moving forward."

Hunter **Biden** in 2008(Photo: Suchat Pederson, The News Journal)

The Wall Street Journal first reported on **Biden**'s cocaine test, citing "people familiar with the matter."

Biden, a lawyer, is now a managing partner in an investment firm.

Navy spokesman Ryan Perry said **Biden** became a reserve officer through the Direct Commission Officer program in 2012.

"In May 2013, he was assigned to the Navy Reserve unit for Navy Public Affairs Support Element East in Norfolk, Va.," Perry said. "Ens. **Biden** was discharged from the Navy Reserve in February 2014. Like other junior officers, the details of Ens. **Biden**'s discharge are not releasable under the Privacy Act."

Biden's Son Discharged From Navy After Positive Cocaine Test

By Katie Zezima And Missy Ryan

[Washington Post](#), October 16, 2014

Vice President Joe **Biden**'s son Hunter was discharged from the Navy Reserve after testing positive for cocaine, a source familiar with the matter confirmed Thursday.

The source spoke anonymously because no permission had been given to speak publicly about a personnel issue.

The Wall Street Journal reported Thursday that **Biden** was discharged earlier this year after failing a drug test in June 2013. A lawyer and former lobbyist, **Biden** was commissioned as an ensign in the Navy Reserve in 2013. He applied for a commission into the reserve as a public affairs officer at age 42. Because of his age, **Biden** needed a waiver to apply. The Journal reported he needed a second waiver because of a drug-related charge when he was younger, a request that is not unusual.

"It was the honor of my life to serve in the US Navy, and I deeply regret and am embarrassed that my actions led to my administrative discharge," Hunter **Biden** said in a statement. "I respect the Navy's decision. With the love and support of my family, I'm moving forward."

Vice President **Biden**'s office declined to comment.

The Navy declined to confirm that **Biden** tested positive for cocaine use. Commander Ryan Perry, a Navy spokesman, said in a statement that **Biden** had been selected for his commission in 2012, and discharged in February 2014. "Like other junior officers, the details of Ens. **Biden**'s discharge are not releasable under the Privacy Act," he said.

Hunter **Biden** was one of seven applicants accepted in 2012 for a direct commission, which allows professionals to join the Navy only by applying and attending a training course. The applicants must complete medical screenings and a security clearance. They are then sent to a 12-day program in Rhode Island that "prepares degreed and often highly experienced professionals to assume Navy Reserve Duty leadership positions in any of a broad range of critical career focus areas" including law and engineering.

"This year, I'm looking forward to standing with our son, Hunter, when he is commissioned as an ensign in the United States Navy," Jill **Biden** said in 2012. "He follows in the footsteps of two of his grandfathers, who have also served in the Navy."

Hunter **Biden** made news earlier this year when it was announced that he would join the board of Burisma Holdings, Ukraine's largest private gas firm. The announcement came shortly after Russia annexed Crimea, while Vice President **Biden** was engaged in diplomatic talks with the country. At the time, Vice President **Biden**'s office stressed that his son was a private citizen.

"The vice president does not endorse any particular company and has no involvement with this company," Kendra Barkoff, a spokeswoman for Vice President **Biden**, said at the time.

Hunter **Biden** is the younger of the vice president's two sons. His other son, Beau, is the attorney general of Delaware and is running for governor. Beau **Biden** is a major in the Delaware National Guard.

Hunter Biden Discharged From Navy Reserve For Positive Cocaine Test

By Douglas Ernst

[Washington Times](#), October 17, 2014

Hunter **Biden** has been discharged by the Navy Reserve after testing positive for cocaine use.

The military career of Vice President Joseph R. **Biden**'s son ended earlier this year after only having been commissioned as an ensign on May 7, 2013, The Wall Street Journal reported Thursday. Mr. **Biden** had been assigned to Navy Public Affairs Support Element East in Norfolk, Virginia.

Mr. **Biden**, who now works for the Ukrainian energy company Burisma Holdings Ltd., said in a statement that it was "the honor of my life to serve in the U.S. Navy, and I deeply regret and am embarrassed that my actions led to my administrative discharge. I respect the Navy's decision. With the love and support of my family, I'm moving forward," The Journal reported. He also serves as a managing partner the investment company Rosemont Seneca Partners.

The vice president's office declined to comment for the paper's story.

It is not known what kind of discharge Mr. **Biden** was given, although a failed drug test would eliminate the possibility of receiving an "honorable" discharge. The most likely outcome for him would have been "other than honorable" or "general" discharge, the Journal reported.

Biden's Son Discharged From Navy Over Drug Use

[Associated Press](#), October 17, 2014

WASHINGTON – Hunter **Biden**, the youngest son of Vice President Joe **Biden**, has been kicked out of the military after testing positive for cocaine, two people familiar with the matter said Thursday.

Biden, a former lobbyist who works at an investment firm, was discharged from the Navy Reserve in February, the Navy said in a statement. The service did not give a reason for **Biden**'s discharge barely a year after he was selected for the part-time position as a public affairs officer in the Navy Reserve.

In a statement released by his attorney, **Biden** did not give a reason for his discharge. He said he respected the Navy's decision and was moving forward with his family's support.

"It was the honor of my life to serve in the U.S. Navy, and I deeply regret and am embarrassed that my actions led to my administrative discharge," he said.

The vice president's office declined to comment.

Biden's attorney didn't respond to inquiries about whether **Biden** had used cocaine. But two people familiar with the matter said **Biden** was discharged after he failed a drug test last year. They weren't authorized to discuss the incident and requested anonymity.

The Wall Street Journal first reported **Biden**'s discharge and failed drug test.

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Biden's Son Discharged From U.S. Navy Reserve After Drug Test: Sources

By Andrea Shalal

[Reuters](#), October 17, 2014

Full-text stories from Reuters currently cannot be included in this document. You may, however, click the link above to access the story.

Report: Joe Biden Son Failed Navy Drug Test

By Nick Gass

[Politico](#), October 17, 2014

The Navy Reserve discharged Vice President Joe **Biden**'s son Hunter earlier this year after he tested positive for cocaine, according to a Wall Street Journal report posted Thursday.

According to the report, Hunter **Biden**, 44, failed a drug test in June 2013 before his discharge in February. **Biden**, who needed a waiver to join the Navy at 43, reportedly needed another waiver because of a drug-related issue at an earlier age.

Biden, who held a part-time position as a public affairs ensign, expressed deep regret and embarrassment for his actions. He currently works as managing partner of an investment company.

"I respect the Navy's decision. With the love and support of my family, I'm moving forward," he said in a statement.

The vice president's office declined comment to The Wall Street Journal. It's not clear whether **Biden** received an honorable discharge.

Report: Biden's Son Discharged From Navy After Failing Cocaine Test

By Peter Sullivan

[The Hill](#), October 17, 2014

Hunter **Biden**, the son of Vice President **Biden**, was discharged from the Navy Reserve this year after testing positive for cocaine, The Wall Street Journal reports.

The paper reports that after joining the Navy as an ensign in 2013, he reported for duty in Norfolk, Va. He was drug tested in June 2013 and the test was positive for cocaine, according to the paper's sources.

Hunter **Biden** was discharged in February of this year.

"It was the honor of my life to serve in the US Navy, and I deeply regret and am embarrassed that my actions led to my administrative discharge," said **Biden** in a statement. "I respect the Navy's decision.

"With the love and support of my family, I'm moving forward," he added.

Hunter **Biden** is now managing director at Rosemont Seneca Technology Partners.

His brother, Delaware Attorney General Beau **Biden** also has a military record, serving in his state's National Guard. Beau **Biden** was also deployed to Iraq while in the guard.

—This story was updated at 7:28 p.m.

Biden's Son Discharged From Navy After Testing Positive For Cocaine

By Eric Bradner

[CNN](#), October 16, 2014

Washington (CNN) – The Navy Reserve discharged Vice President Joe **Biden**'s son Hunter this year after he tested positive for cocaine, U.S. officials confirmed.

The discharge of **Biden**, a 44-year-old lawyer and managing partner at an investment firm, was first reported by the Wall Street Journal on Thursday. He confirmed the report in a statement to CNN.

"It was the honor of my life to serve in the U.S. Navy, and I deeply regret and am embarrassed that my actions led to my administrative discharge. I respect the Navy's decision. With the love and support of my family, I'm moving forward," he said.

Biden was commissioned as an ensign in May 2013 and assigned as a public affairs officer in a Norfolk, Virginia-based reserve unit. A month later, he tested positive for cocaine, and he was discharged in February, according to the report.

The U.S. official said the Navy never had contact with the vice president's office over the issue, and that standard procedure for failed drug tests is administrative discharge. The vice president's office didn't comment on the report.

Hunter **Biden** is the younger of **Biden**'s two sons. His older brother, Beau **Biden**, is Delaware's attorney general and a major in the Delaware Army National Guard. He was deployed for a year in Iraq.

CNN's Barbara Starr and Jim Acosta contributed to this report.

Biden's Son Discharged From Navy After Reportedly Testing Positive For Cocaine

By Ed Henry

[Fox News](#), October 16, 2014

The son of Vice President Joe **Biden** says he is "embarrassed" after being discharged from the Navy Reserve earlier this year --- reportedly after testing positive for cocaine.

The Wall Street Journal, citing people familiar with the matter, reported Thursday that Hunter **Biden's** short-lived military career ended because he failed a drug test after reporting to his unit in 2013. According to the Wall Street Journal, the Navy discharged him in February of this year.

Biden said in a statement to Fox News that he respects the Navy's decision but did not specify why he was discharged.

"It was the honor of my life to serve in the U.S. Navy, and I deeply regret and am embarrassed that my actions led to my administrative discharge," he said. "I respect the Navy's decision. With the love and support of my family, I'm moving forward."

Biden, 44, made the decision to join the military late in life. According to the Wall Street Journal, **Biden** was commissioned as an ensign in the Navy Reserve in 2013 after deciding the previous year to join the service as a public affairs officer.

However, **Biden** was given a drug test after reporting to his unit at Navy Public Affairs Support Element East in Norfolk, Va. and tested positive for cocaine, the Wall Street Journal reported. According to the paper, the Navy would not specify what sort of discharge he was given.

Vice President **Biden** spoke about his son's decision to join the Navy late in life at the American Legion's Salute to Heroes Inaugural Ball in 2013, joking that his son's decision was a result of poor judgment.

"We have a lot of bad judgment in my family," **Biden** said. "My son over 40 just joined the Navy to be sworn in."

Hunter **Biden** is a lawyer who serves as a managing partner for a Rosemont Seneca Partners, an investment firm. He made headlines earlier this year when he was hired to be a director and lawyer for a Ukraine company promoting energy independence from Moscow.

The move raised eyebrows, as Vice President **Biden** and others in the Obama administration have attempted to influence energy policies and other issues of the Ukrainian government as it battles Russia and pro-Russian separatists to control the county.

The vice president's spokeswoman, Kendra Barkoff, has said that **Biden's** son is a private citizen and a lawyer, and that Joe **Biden** "does not endorse any particular company and has no involvement with this company."

Fox News' Ed Henry contributed to this report.

Biden's Son, Hunter, Discharged From Navy Over Failed Cocaine Test : The Two-Way : NPR

By Eyder Peralta

[NPR](#), October 16, 2014

Vice President Joe **Biden's** son, Hunter, has been discharged from the Navy after testing positive for cocaine, The Wall Street Journal reported on Thursday.

Citing "people familiar with the matter," the paper reports:

“Hunter **Biden**, a lawyer by training who is now a managing partner at an investment company, had been commissioned as an ensign in the Navy Reserve, a part-time position. But after failing a drug test last year, his brief military career ended.

“Mr. **Biden**, 44 years old, decided to pursue military service relatively late, beginning the direct-commission process to become a public-affairs officer in the Navy Reserve in 2012. Because of his age—43 when he was to be commissioned—he needed a waiver to join the Navy. He received a second Navy waiver because of a drug-related incident when he was a young man, according to people familiar with the matter. Military officials say such drug waivers aren’t uncommon.”

In a statement issued by Hunter **Biden** in response to the Wall Street Journal story, he says that serving in the Navy was the honor of his life.

“I deeply regret and am embarrassed that my actions led to my administrative discharge,” he said. “I respect the Navy’s decision. With the love and support of my family, I’m moving forward.”

ABC News, citing “a person familiar with the case,” reports that Hunter **Biden** was discharged from the Navy in February after failing a urinalysis test.

The network adds:

“Separately, a Navy spokesman confirmed that **Biden** had been discharged from the Navy, but because of Privacy Act restrictions could not detail why he had been discharged.

“‘Ensign Hunter **Biden** was selected for commission through the Direct Commission Officer Program in 2012,’ Cmd. Ryan Perry said. ‘In May, 2013 he was assigned to the Navy Public Supports Element East in Norfolk, Virginia. He was discharged from the Navy Reserve in February, 2014. Like other junior officers, the details of Ensign **Biden**’s discharge are not releasable under the Privacy Act.’”

Joe Biden’s Son Hunter Kicked Out Of Navy For Cocaine

By Jim Miklaszewski and Courtney Kube

[NBC News](#), October 17, 2014

Vice President Joe **Biden**’s son was booted from the Navy Reserve earlier because he tested positive for drugs, it was revealed on Thursday.

A U.S. official told NBC News that Hunter **Biden** was kicked out of the Reserve earlier this year after he failed a drug test.

The official said **Biden** failed the test in 2013, but he was not kicked out until Feb. 14 of this year. Senior U.S. officials told NBC News that **Biden**, 44, tested positive for cocaine. The Wall Street Journal first reported the incident.

According to one official, **Biden**’s dismissal from the Naval Reserves was not made public “because he was treated like any other sailor who fails a drug test and is thrown out of the Navy.” The official said the services do not routinely report such cases.

Hunter **Biden**, who is married with three kids, issued a statement Thursday evening through his lawyer, saying: “It was the honor of my life to serve in the US Navy, and I deeply regret and am embarrassed that my actions led to my administrative discharge. I respect the Navy’s decision. With the love and support of my family, I’m moving forward.”

Biden was commissioned in the Navy Reserves in 2012 as an Ensign and was pursuing a public affairs track. He had to get a waiver because of his age at the time of his commissioning.

Hunter Biden Discharged From Navy Reserve Over Cocaine

By Rachel Kleinman

[MSNBC](#), October 17, 2014

Hunter **Biden** – the 44-year-old son of Vice President Joe **Biden** – was discharged from the Navy Reserve earlier this year upon failing a drug test in 2013, a U.S. official confirmed to NBC News.

Biden was commissioned by the Navy in 2012 as an Ensign.

It was the honor of my life to serve in the U.S. Navy, and I deeply regret and am embarrassed that my actions led to my administrative discharge,” **Biden** said in a statement. “I respect the Navy’s decision. With the love and support of my family, I’m moving forward.”

Hunter **Biden** tested positive for cocaine during a drill weekend in mid-2013, a U.S. official told NBC News.

Andrea Mitchell Reports, 4/22/14, 1:18 PM ET Hunter **Biden** tries to live on \$1.50 a day

The “Live Below The Line” campaign hopes to bring attention to extreme poverty by challenging people to live a budget of \$1.50 a day for up to five days. Hunter **Biden** and Rick Leach, President and CEO of World Food program USA, discuss. Hunter **Biden** is Vice President Joe **Biden**’s second son, and stepson to Joe **Biden**’s wife Jill **Biden**. He is a licensed attorney and managing partner at Rosemont Seneca Partners, LLC.

Joe **Biden**’s oldest son Beau **Biden** is the attorney general of Delaware and currently considered a front-runner in the 2016 race for governor of the Diamond State. A recent University of Delaware poll shows 60% of respondents view Beau **Biden** favorably.

Joe Biden’s Son Hunter Biden Discharged From Navy After Positive Cocaine Test

By Luis Martinez and Arlette Saenz

[ABC Otus News](#), October 17, 2014

Vice President Joe **Biden**’s son Hunter **Biden** was discharged from the Navy in February after testing positive for cocaine, a person familiar with the case confirmed to ABC News.

The person said **Biden** had failed a urinalysis test administered in June 2013 before he was discharged from the Navy.

“It was the honor of my life to serve in the U.S. Navy, and I deeply regret and am embarrassed that my actions led to my administrative discharge,” Hunter **Biden** said in a statement distributed through his lawyer. “I respect the Navy’s decision. With the love and support of my family, I’m moving forward.”

The person familiar with the case said he “was treated no different than any other sailor.”

Biden, 44, had needed an age waiver to join the Reserves because of his age as well as a second waiver because of a drug-related incident while a young man.

Separately, a Navy spokesman confirmed that **Biden** had been discharged from the Navy, but because of Privacy Act restrictions could not detail why he had been discharged.

“Ensign Hunter **Biden** was selected for commission through the Direct Commission Officer Program in 2012,” Cmdr. Ryan Perry said. “In May, 2013 he was assigned to the Navy Public Supports Element East in Norfolk, Virginia. He was discharged from the Navy Reserve in February, 2014. Like other junior officers, the details of Ensign **Biden**’s discharge are not releasable under the Privacy Act.”

News of Hunter **Biden**’s discharge was first reported by the Wall Street Journal.

Failed Drug Test Leads To Discharge Of Biden's Son

By William H. McMichael and Jonathan Starkey

[Wilmington \(DE\) News Journal](#), October 16, 2014

Hunter **Biden**, the younger son of Vice President Joe **Biden**, failed a drug test for cocaine a month after his commissioning into the Navy Reserve and was discharged, The Wall Street Journal reported late Thursday.

"It was the honor of my life to serve in the U.S. Navy, and I deeply regret and am embarrassed that my actions led to my administrative discharge," **Biden** said in statement issued through his lawyer. "I respect the Navy's decision. With the love and support of my family, I'm moving forward."

A spokeswoman for the vice president declined to comment.

Biden, an ensign, was selected for commission as a reserve officer through the Direct Commission Officer program in 2012, according to Cmdr. Ryan Perry, a Navy spokesman.

In May 2013, **Biden**, 43 was commissioned into the Navy Reserve unit for Navy Public Affairs Support Element East in Norfolk, Virginia. **Biden**, who had no prior military experience, was one of six officers commissioned nationally into the public affairs division of the Navy Reserve.

The Wall Street Journal, citing "people familiar with the matter" reported that **Biden** was given a drug test in June 2013 that tested positive for cocaine.

The brother of Delaware Attorney General Beau **Biden**, Hunter **Biden** – who has worked as a lawyer, lobbyist and managing partner at the investment firm Rosemont Seneca Partners in Washington – was discharged from the Navy Reserve in February.

Perry would provide no other details. "Like other junior officers, the details of Ensign **Biden's** discharge are not releasable under the Privacy Act," he said.

Asked whether **Biden's** commissioning had anything to do with his father's high position in the government, Perry succinctly told The News Journal, "No, it didn't.

"All candidates were considered based on the merits of their application and Mr. **Biden** met the qualifications for commission," Perry said.

Applicants to the direct commissioning program for the Public Affairs Reserve must hold a baccalaureate degree or higher from an accredited institution, preferably in the fields of communication, English, Journalism, broadcasting, public relations, rhetoric/speech, marketing, international studies or public administration. Applicants may not have passed their 42nd birthday at time of commissioning or an age waiver is required. The board meets twice annually and, on average, approximately 35 people apply, Ryan said.

Biden sought and received a waiver to join the service because of his age.

The Wall Street Journal reported Thursday that **Biden** received a second waiver because of a "drug-related incident when he was a young man." The report added that such waivers are not uncommon.

The vice president joked in January 2013 about Hunter's decision to join the military late in life during a speech at the American Legion's Salute to Heroes Inaugural Ball, which honors Medal of Honor recipients.

"We have a lot of bad judgment in my family. "My son, who is over 40, just joined the United States Navy. He's about to be sworn in as an officer," **Biden** said.

But Hunter joining the military was a source of pride for the Bidens, and military service runs in the family.

Beau **Biden** is a major in the Delaware Army National Guard and served in Iraq from October 2008 to September 2009.

Jill **Biden** talked about Hunter joining the Navy during a November 2012 event with Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus

"I'm looking forward to standing with our son, Hunter, when he is commissioned as an ensign in the United States Navy," Jill **Biden** said at the time, according to a Navy transcript. "He follows in the footsteps of two of his grandfathers, who have also served in the Navy."

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Read or Share this story: <http://delonline.us/1wa4SID>

Cocaine Busted: Biden's Son Booted From The Navy After One Reserve-duty Weekend

By Timothy Whiteman

[Examiner](#), October 17, 2014

After a singular weekend Reservist drill with the U.S. Navy, Vice President Joe **Biden's** youngest son has been kicked out of the Armed Forces for cocaine use. As reported by the Wall Street Journal on Oct. 16, 2014, the now ex-Ensign Hunter **Biden** sunk his naval career literally on his first day of duty.

Deemed an Officer and a Gentleman by an act of Congress, **Biden** was commissioned an Ensign on May 7, 2013 in the Navy Reserve. Assigned to the Navy Public Affairs Support Element East reserve command, then Ensign **Biden** reported for duty to his unit one short month later for his first ever weekend reserve drill at the sprawling Naval Station in Norfolk, Virginia. Upon arrival, he was promptly given a drug test, which just as promptly, came back with a positive result for cocaine use. After months of working its way through the bureaucracy, **Biden** was finally released from the Navy last February, sans Honorable Discharge.

The youngest of the **Biden** sons waited somewhat late in life to pursue a military career at the age of 43, albeit that of the Naval Reserve component vice active duty. Seeking one of the very rare Direct Commission Officer (DCO) slots available every year, the former Ensign **Biden** managed to secure one of the six seats open for Public Affairs Officers.

With the official cut off that of no older than 35, **Biden** somehow managed to be granted an age waiver by the Navy Department. Yet the over-age waiver was only the first. Reportedly, he also managed to secure a second waiver for a prior drug-related incident in his past.

DCOs aren't required to attend any of the Service Academies nor any of the standard and usually rigorous Officer Commissioning Programs offered at most major universities and colleges. **Biden's** formal training prior to his commissioning was what the Old Salts in the Navy refer to as The Knife and Fork School. The two week long seminar located at the Naval Station, Newport, Rhode Island consists of "academic instruction, military training, and physical conditioning. 90+ hours of lessons include: Leadership and Management, Programs and Policies, Military Customs, Traditions, and regulations, naval history, Naval Warfare, and Fitness and Wellness Programs" as cited in the Navy's official website

While there's been no official comment from the Office of the Vice President, former Ensign **Biden** is somehow managing to move in with his life. While it hasn't been released if he's received a General Discharge or an Other than Honorable, the ex-Ensign said in a statement that it was "the honor of my life to serve in the U.S. Navy, and I deeply regret and am embarrassed that my actions led to my administrative discharge. I respect the Navy's decision. With the love and support of my family, I'm moving forward."

While his being bounced from the Navy may be a professional embarrassment, it certainly won't effect him financially. **Biden** is currently a partner at Rosemont Seneca Partners, LLC and is Counsel to

the a New York based-law firm of Boies, Schiller, Flexner, LLP. Additionally, he was the center of controversy when he was appointed to the board of the Ukrainian Energy Company Burisma Holdings, which is part of the vast business empire of Ihor Kolomoisky, who himself has been looked upon for rather shady financial dealings in Eastern Europe.

Vice President Biden's Youngest Son Discharged From Navy Reserves After Testing Positive For Cocaine: Report

By DAN FRIEDMAN

[New York Daily News](#), October 17, 2014

WASHINGTON — Vice President **Biden**'s youngest son was discharged from the Navy Reserves this year after testing positive for cocaine, according to a report Thursday.

Hunter **Biden**, 44, a lawyer who works for an investment company, failed the drug test after he reported to a Norfolk, Va., reserve unit last year, the Wall Street Journal reported.

It was "the honor of my life to serve in the U.S. Navy, and I deeply regret and am embarrassed that my actions led to my administrative discharge," Hunter **Biden** said in a statement.

"I respect the Navy's decision. With the love and support of my family, I'm moving forward."

Biden joined the reserve officer program in 2012. He was commissioned as an ensign in 2013 and assigned to a public affairs unit in Norfolk.

After reporting to the unit in June 2013, **Biden** was given a urinalysis drug test, and he failed it. He was discharged in February 2014.

The vice president's son "was treated no different than any other sailor," a person familiar with the matter told ABC News.

The Navy confirmed **Biden** was discharged but declined to comment on the reason for the discharge because of Privacy Act restrictions.

Navy personnel who are discharged because of a failed drug test are not given honorable discharges. Most receive an "other than honorable" or "general" discharge.

It isn't clear which discharge **Biden** received, the Journal reported.

In joining the Navy Reserves, **Biden** needed one waiver because of his age and a second waiver because of a drug-related incident when he was younger.

A spokeswoman for Vice President **Biden**, who is widely believed to be considering a 2016 presidential bid, declined to comment.

The veep has publicly cited Hunter **Biden**'s Navy position, telling an American Legion gathering in 2013, "My son, who is over 40, just joined the United States Navy. He's about to be sworn in as an officer, Hunter **Biden**."

Hunter **Biden**, who is married with three children, graduated from Georgetown University and Yale Law School, and serves as managing partner at Rosemont Seneca Partners in Washington, D.C. In May, he joined the board of Ukraine's largest private gas firm.

The vice president's older son, Delaware Attorney General Beau **Biden**, is expected to run for governor.

Joe **Biden** and his wife Jill have a daughter, Ashley, who joined the Delaware Center for Justice in 2012 as associate executive director.

A member of the extended **Biden** clan, the vice president's niece Caroline **Biden**, was nabbed last year in Manhattan for assaulting a cop and refusing arrest after a dispute with a roommate over rent. Because the officer was not hurt, prosecutors earlier this year agreed to dismiss the charges and seal her record if she stayed out of trouble for six months.

Hunter Biden Kicked Out Of The Navy For Failing Cocaine Test

[New York Post](#), October 17, 2014

WASHINGTON—Vice President Joe **Biden**'s son Hunter was discharged from the Navy Reserve this year after testing positive for cocaine, according to people familiar with the matter.

Hunter **Biden**, a lawyer by training who is now a managing partner at an investment company, had been commissioned as an ensign in the Navy Reserve, a part-time position. But after failing a drug test last year, his brief military career ended.

Biden, 44 years old, decided to pursue military service relatively late, beginning the direct-commission process to become a public-affairs officer in the Navy Reserve in 2012. Because of his age—43 when he was to be commissioned—he needed a waiver to join the Navy. He received a second Navy waiver because of a drug-related incident when he was a young man, according to people familiar with the matter. Military officials say such drug waivers aren't uncommon.

Biden was commissioned as an ensign on May 7, 2013, and assigned to Navy Public Affairs Support Element East in Norfolk, Va., a reserve unit, according to the Navy. In June 2013, after reporting to his unit in Norfolk, he was given a drug test, which turned up positive for cocaine, according to people familiar with the situation. **Biden** was discharged in February, the Navy said.

Biden said in a statement that it was "the honor of my life to serve in the U.S. Navy, and I deeply regret and am embarrassed that my actions led to my administrative discharge. I respect the Navy's decision. With the love and support of my family, I'm moving forward."

This article originally appeared on Marketwatch.

VP Biden's Son Kicked Out Of Navy Reserve

By O'Ryan Johnson

[Boston Herald](#), October 17, 2014

The youngest son of Vice President Joe **Biden** was kicked out of the Navy Reserve after testing positive for cocaine, two people familiar with the matter said yesterday.

Hunter **Biden**, 44, was discharged from the Navy Reserve in February, the Navy said in a statement. The Navy did not give a reason for the discharge.

Biden's attorney didn't respond to inquiries about whether **Biden** had used cocaine. But two people familiar with the matter said **Biden** was discharged after he failed a drug test last year. They weren't authorized to discuss the incident and requested anonymity.

Hunter **Biden** released a statement saying he was honored "to serve in the Navy and he was "embarrassed" by his actions.

"It was the honor of my life to serve in the U.S. Navy, and I deeply regret and am embarrassed that my actions led to my administrative discharge," Hunter **Biden** said in a statement. "I respect the Navy's decision. With the love and support of my family, I'm moving forward."

The vice president's office declined to comment.

Biden, a former lobbyist who works at an investment firm, was discharged barely a year after he was selected for the part-time position as a public affairs officer in the Navy Reserve.

His brother, Beau, is the attorney general of Delaware and is a major in the state's Army National Guard.

Hunter Biden Discharged From Navy

By Paul Szoldra

[Business Insider](#), October 17, 2014

Vice President Joe **Biden**'s son Hunter was kicked out of the Navy Reserve this year after he tested positive for cocaine, The Wall Street Journal reported Thursday.

A Yale-educated lawyer, the 44-year-old Hunter **Biden** was commissioned as a Navy ensign May 7, 2013 and assigned as a public affairs officer at a reserve unit in Norfolk, Va., the Journal reported. But just a month later when he checked into his new unit and was given a drug test, he popped for cocaine.

He was discharged in February of this year.

In a statement, **Biden** said it was "the honor of my life to serve in the U.S. Navy, and I deeply regret and am embarrassed that my actions led to my administrative discharge. I respect the Navy's decision. With the love and support of my family, I'm moving forward."

It was not clear what type of discharge he received. Military personnel discharged for drug usage usually do not receive honorable discharges, although **Biden**'s statement says he received an "administrative discharge."

The Navy did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

CNN has more:

The U.S. official said the Navy never had contact with the vice president's office over the issue, and that standard procedure for failed drug tests is administrative discharge. The vice president's office didn't comment on the report.

In a speech given at the commissioning of the USS Delaware in 2012, Navy Secretary Ray Mabus noted that Hunter would be joining the service. His brother Beau also served in the military, as an attorney in the Army with a deployment to Iraq.

Biden's job in the Navy Reserve was only a part-time commitment. He has kept busy as head of the legal unit for Ukraine's largest private gas firm, according to The Washington Post. He also serves as managing partner at Rosemont Seneca Partners and is an adjunct professor at Georgetown University.

Top News, Latest Headlines, Latest News, World News & U.S News

[UPI](#), October 16, 2014

WASHINGTON, Oct. 16 (UPI) –

Hunter **Biden** was discharged from the Navy this year for cocaine.

The 44-year-old son of Vice President Joe **Biden** was kicked out of the Navy Reserve after failing a drug test for cocaine, sources confirmed to The Wall Street Journal

Thursday. **Biden** commissioned as an ensign in May 2013, tested positive for cocaine in June 2013 and was subsequently discharged in February.

"It was the honor of my life to serve in the U.S. Navy, and I deeply regret and am embarrassed that my actions led to my administrative discharge," **Biden** said in a statement. "I respect the Navy's decision. With the love and support of my family, I'm moving forward."

Biden attended Yale Law School, and was a founding partner of Washington D.C.-based law firm Oldaker, **Biden**, and Belair, LLP. He is currently serves as chairman of World Food Program USA, and was appointed

to the board of directors at Bursima Holdings in May.

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NEW YORK TIMES AND WASHINGTON POST OP-EDS

Keeping Ebola At Bay

[New York Times](#), October 17, 2014

The Ebola cases in the United States show that American hospitals and public health officials have much to learn about effective ways to protect health care workers and the public from possible infection.

Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital, the first hospital put to the test, failed to protect two nurses, who had cared for the Ebola victim Thomas Eric Duncan, from becoming infected. Perhaps more alarming are the stumbles by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the lead federal agency for fighting infectious diseases.

One of the nurses, who was monitoring her own temperature, called the C.D.C. and was allowed to take a commercial flight from Cleveland to Dallas-Fort Worth even though she had a slight fever, which did not violate current guidelines. That was an incredible lapse in judgment by the C.D.C.

Health officials and the flight's airline are now scrambling to notify passengers, crew members and janitors who cleaned the planes she traveled on of possible exposure. While the danger to those people appears slight, this incident shows that the C.D.C. needs to lower the fever threshold in its guidance and advise against any travel on public forms of transportation for 21 days by people who have potentially been exposed to the virus.

There is more the agency ought to do. It should be increasing the rigor of its guidelines on protective clothing for health care workers, hospital readiness, and training on the handling of Ebola cases. President Obama said on Thursday evening that he is considering appointing an "Ebola czar" to manage the government's response.

The C.D.C.'s inadequate advice to hospitals on how to protect health care workers may have contributed to the latest cases. An expert who oversaw the treatment of two American missionaries flown from West Africa to Atlanta for treatment at Emory University Hospital told The Times that he had warned the C.D.C. repeatedly that its guidelines were irresponsibly lax. The guidelines allowed protective garments that left the neck and other areas exposed. It was not until Tuesday night that the agency — essentially acknowledging its error — issued new, stricter guidelines requiring full-body suits covering the head and neck, as well as close supervision of the risky process of taking off protective gear.

Unless the C.D.C. can help hospitals prepare properly, every new case will result in improvised responses that may not work. The hospital in Dallas has sent one of the nurses to Emory and the other to the National Institutes of Health, two of the nation's four specially designated high-containment hospitals. But there are only a limited number of beds in these institutions (N.I.H. has only two such beds), so other major medical centers must be ready to accept cases if necessary. Some hospitals in cities with large West African populations are taking steps to train their staffs.

While the chance that an infected patient will show up at any particular hospital or clinic is very small, health workers should still know the basics of what to do if a patient arrives at their door. National Nurses United, the country's largest union of nurses, says there has been almost no hands-on training, just easy-to-ignore guidance documents.

The advice now from the C.D.C. is for emergency room staff to take travel histories, isolate patients who have fevers and have been in West Africa, and call the C.D.C. if Ebola is suspected. Once a case is diagnosed as Ebola, the C.D.C. will fly in a swat team of experts within hours to oversee treatment.

At a congressional hearing on Thursday, House members asked whether the United States was adequately protected against people who might have been infected in West Africa but did not yet have

symptoms. The current system relies on screening before they are allowed to fly out of West Africa and again when they reach airports in this country. So far, only one infected patient — the man who was treated in Dallas and later died — escaped detection at the airports since the epidemic was first identified seven months ago. There should be some comfort in knowing that that part of the system is working.

Even so, some members of Congress, mostly Republicans, have called for barring entry to all people who have been in the Ebola-stricken countries as a way to keep the virus out.

The danger is that if other nations followed an American ban with bans of their own, economies in West Africa would be crippled. That could only reduce the ability of those nations to fight the epidemic, and make it even more likely the disease would spread through porous borders to other African nations and beyond.

Evo Morales Of Bolivia And Democracy

[New York Times](#), October 17, 2014

Evo Morales, Bolivia's populist president, dedicated his landslide re-election victory on Sunday night to the late Venezuelan leader, Hugo Chávez. Mr. Chávez's brand of socialist policies and anti-American bombast have found strong resonance in much of the continent, most significantly in Ecuador and Bolivia.

Most Latin American nations hold regular, credible elections, although the strength of democratic values in the region has been undermined in past years by coups and electoral irregularities. But perhaps the most disquieting trend is that protégés of Mr. Chávez seem inclined to emulate his reluctance to cede power.

If Mr. Morales, who was first elected in 2006, serves out his term and leaves office in 2020, he will be the country's longest-serving president. With strong popular support and allies in Congress, he could well try to stay in power even longer by amending the constitution or calling for a referendum. (He recently said in an interview that he was not inclined to stay beyond 2020, but his remarks were far from categorical.)

In Ecuador, President Rafael Correa is seeking legislative action that would allow all elected officials to run for an indefinite number of terms. Diplomats and analysts say some Central American leaders are likely to follow suit.

Colombia managed to resist this trend near the end of former President Álvaro Uribe's second term in office in 2010. Having amended the Constitution once in 2006 to secure a second term, Mr. Uribe's supporters in Congress tried to keep him in office for a third. They were stopped by a sound ruling of the country's Constitutional Court.

It is easy to see why many Bolivians would want to see Mr. Morales, the country's first president with indigenous roots, remain at the helm. During his tenure, the economy of the country, one of the least developed in the hemisphere, grew at a healthy rate, the level of inequality shrank and the number of people living in poverty dropped significantly. He has also given the Andean nation, with its history of political turmoil, a long stretch of relative stability.

But the pattern of prolonged terms in power is unhealthy for the region. It is disquieting that the stronger democracies in Latin America seem happy to condone it. To varying degrees, Latin America's entrenched rulers have weakened institutions and asserted greater control over the press. Staying in office for several terms enables leaders to appoint allies to electoral and judicial bodies and to build patronage networks that turn out the vote.

The starkest, and most alarming, example, is President Nicolás Maduro of Venezuela, Mr. Chávez's handpicked successor, who has turned his country into an autocratic, despotic state.

This regional dynamic has been dismal for Washington's influence in the region. In Venezuela, Bolivia and Ecuador, the new generation of caudillos have staked out anti-American policies and limited the scope of engagement on development, military cooperation and drug enforcement efforts. This has damaged the prospects for trade and security cooperation.

Mr. Morales could keep Bolivia on a positive trajectory by continuing to invest in social welfare programs and infrastructure. His legacy would be stronger if he, or lawmakers, decided that this new term would be his last.

Why North Carolina's Senate Race Has A Wide Gender Gap

By David Firestone

[New York Times](#), October 17, 2014

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — There are two Southern women running for re-election to the Senate this year, both of them Democrats, and the difference in their approach to social issues says everything about the temper of their states.

In Louisiana, a deeply conservative state with a large Catholic population, Mary Landrieu has taken what she calls “nuanced” positions on abortion and same-sex marriage, essentially trying to have it both ways. She says life begins at conception, but the government should stay out of the bedroom and doctor's office, except if it wants to ban late-term abortions.

She says she supports same-sex marriage, but also supports the Louisiana constitutional amendment banning it. It's no wonder she would rather spend her time extolling fossil fuels.

But on Wednesday in Charlotte, Kay Hagan stood without hesitation next to Janet Colm, chief executive of the Planned Parenthood Action Fund of Central North Carolina, and proudly bashed her opponent, Thom Tillis, for reducing women's rights on abortion and birth control.

“It is 2014, and these decisions should be between a woman and her doctor, not between a woman and her boss, nor her senator,” she said at a news conference here, surrounded by cheering female supporters. “And let me tell you, after seeing what Thom Tillis has done in Raleigh, I am so glad that no legislator in Raleigh is my doctor.”

Ms. Hagan needs women to show up at the polls on Nov. 4, maybe more so than candidates in other races. She has been running even or a few points ahead of Mr. Tillis in a swing state that is better educated and more urbanized than Louisiana, and some polls have given her an advantage of as much as 20 percent over Mr. Tillis among women, the biggest gender gap in any Senate race.

Under the circumstances, she couldn't ask for a more perfect opponent, because Mr. Tillis — the speaker of the state House — has a long record of making life harder for women in North Carolina, particularly poor ones. He led Republicans in defunding Planned Parenthood, which provides preventive health services and birth control.

He added a series of abortion-clinic restrictions to a motorcycle-safety bill and pushed it into law. And he refused to expand Medicaid in the state, denying health insurance to 500,000 people, including 277,000 women.

He has said states have the right to ban contraceptives, supports a personhood amendment that would effectively ban abortion (though he favors an exception for rape, incest and health dangers), and has fought same-sex marriage in the state. He killed a bill mandating equal pay for women, saying existing laws were adequate. “Let's enforce the laws on the books,” he said at a recent debate, “versus some of the campaign gimmicks that are going to put more regulations on businesses and make it more difficult.”

More broadly, Mr. Tillis embodies the backward turn that North Carolina took when Republicans assumed control of state government last year and proceeded to dismantle years of progress on education, racial equality and ballot access.

The state's decline has dismayed even moderate voters, and is a big reason Ms. Hagan has not fallen behind in the race, despite President Obama's unpopularity in the state.

To stay ahead, she will need every woman's vote she can find. And even though she didn't say so on Wednesday, there's a lot at stake for men, too.

The Dark Market For Personal Data

By Frank Pasquale

[New York Times](#), October 17, 2014

BALTIMORE — THE reputation business is exploding. Having eroded privacy for decades, shady, poorly regulated data miners, brokers and resellers have now taken creepy classification to a whole new level. They have created lists of victims of sexual assault, and lists of people with sexually transmitted diseases. Lists of people who have Alzheimer's, dementia and AIDS. Lists of the impotent and the depressed.

There are lists of "impulse buyers." Lists of suckers: gullible consumers who have shown that they are susceptible to "vulnerability-based marketing." And lists of those deemed commercially undesirable because they live in or near trailer parks or nursing homes. Not to mention lists of people who have been accused of wrongdoing, even if they were not charged or convicted.

Typically sold at a few cents per name, the lists don't have to be particularly reliable to attract eager buyers — mostly marketers, but also, increasingly, financial institutions vetting customers to guard against fraud, and employers screening potential hires.

There are three problems with these lists. First, they are often inaccurate. For example, as The Washington Post reported, an Arkansas woman found her credit history and job prospects wrecked after she was mistakenly listed as a methamphetamine dealer. It took her years to clear her name and find a job.

Second, even when the information is accurate, many of the lists have no business being in the hands of retailers, bosses or banks. Having a medical condition, or having been a victim of a crime, is simply not relevant to most employment or credit decisions.

Third, people aren't told they are on these lists, so they have no opportunity to correct bad information. The Arkansas woman found out about the inaccurate report only when she was denied a job. She was one of the rare ones.

"Data-driven" hiring practices are under increasing scrutiny, because the data may be a proxy for race, class or disability. For example, in 2011, CVS settled a charge of disability discrimination after a job applicant challenged a personality test that probed mental health issues. But if an employer were to secretly use lists based on inferences about mental health, it would be nearly impossible for an affected applicant to find out what was going on. Secrecy is discrimination's best friend: Unknown unfairness can never be detected, let alone corrected.

These problems can't be solved with existing law. The Federal Trade Commission has strained to understand personal data markets — a \$156-billion-a-year industry — and it can't find out where the data brokers get their information, and whom they sell it to. Hiding behind a veil of trade secrecy, most refuse to divulge this vital information.

The market in personal information offers little incentive for accuracy; it matters little to list-buyers whether every entry is accurate — they need only a certain threshold percentage of “hits” to improve their targeting. But to individuals wrongly included on derogatory lists, the harm to their reputation is great.

The World Privacy Forum, a research and advocacy organization, estimates that there are about 4,000 data brokers. They range from giants like Acxiom, a publicly traded company that helps marketers target consumer segments, to boutiques like Paramount Lists, which has compiled lists of addicts and debtors. Companies like these vacuum up data from just about any source imaginable: consumer health websites, payday lenders, online surveys, warranty registrations, Internet sweepstakes, loyalty-card data from retailers, charities’ donor lists, magazine subscription lists, and information from public records.

It’s unrealistic to expect individuals to inquire, broker by broker, about their files. Instead, we need to require brokers to make targeted disclosures to consumers. Uncovering problems in Big Data (or decision models based on that data) should not be a burden we expect individuals to solve on their own.

Privacy protections in other areas of the law can and should be extended to cover consumer data. The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act, or Hipaa, obliges doctors and hospitals to give patients access to their records. The Fair Credit Reporting Act gives loan and job applicants, among others, a right to access, correct and annotate files maintained by credit reporting agencies.

It is time to modernize these laws by applying them to all companies that peddle sensitive personal information. If the laws cover only a narrow range of entities, they may as well be dead letters. For example, protections in Hipaa don’t govern the “health profiles” that are compiled and traded by data brokers, which can learn a great deal about our health even without access to medical records.

Congress should require data brokers to register with the Federal Trade Commission, and allow individuals to request immediate notification once they have been placed on lists that contain sensitive data. Reputable data brokers will want to respond to good-faith complaints, to make their lists more accurate. Plaintiffs’ lawyers could use defamation law to hold recalcitrant firms accountable.

We need regulation to help consumers recognize the perils of the new information landscape without being overwhelmed with data. The right to be notified about the use of one’s data and the right to challenge and correct errors is fundamental. Without these protections, we’ll continue to be judged by a big-data Star Chamber of unaccountable decision makers using questionable sources.

Frank Pasquale, a professor of law at the University of Maryland, is the author of the forthcoming book “The Black Box Society: The Secret Algorithms That Control Money and Information.”

The Case For Low Ideals

By David Brooks

[New York Times](#), October 17, 2014

Let’s say you came of political age during Barack Obama’s 2008 campaign. Maybe you were swept up in the idealism. But now you’ve seen an election driven by hope give way to an election driven by fear. Partisans are afraid the other side might win. Candidates are pawns of the consultants because they’re afraid of themselves. Everybody’s afraid of the Ebola virus, ISIS and the fragile economy.

The politics of the last few years have made you disappointed, disillusioned and cynical. You look back at your earlier idealism as cotton candy.

Well, I’m here to make the case for political idealism.

I’m not making the case for the high idealism that surrounded that 2008 campaign. It was based on the idea that people are basically innocent and differences can be quickly transcended. It was based on the idea that society is easily malleable and it’s possible to have quick transformational change. It was based in the idea of a heroic savior (remember those “Hope” posters).

I'm here to make the case for low idealism. The low idealist rejects the politics of innocence. The low idealist recoils from any movement that promises "new beginnings," tries to offer transcendent "bliss to be alive" moments or tries to fill people's spiritual voids.

Low idealism begins with a sturdy and accurate view of human nature. We're all a bit self-centered, self-interested and inclined to think we are nobler than we are. Montaigne wrote, "If others examined themselves attentively, as I do, they would find themselves, as I do, full of inanity and nonsense. Get rid of it I cannot without getting rid of myself."

Low idealism continues with a realistic view of politics. Politics is slow drilling through hard boards. It is a series of messy compromises. The core functions of government are negative — putting out fires, arresting criminals, settling disputes — and much of what government does is the unromantic work of preventing bad situations from getting worse.

Politicians operate in a recalcitrant medium with incomplete information, bad options and no sleep. Government in good times is merely dull; when it is enthralling, times are usually bad.

So low idealism starts with a tone of sympathy. Anybody who works in this realm deserves compassion and gentle regard. The low idealist knows that rallies with anthems and roaring are just make-believe, but has warm affection for any politician who exhibits neighborliness, courtesy and the ability to listen. The low idealist understands that those who try to rise above the messy business of deal-making often turn into zealots and wind up sinking below it. On the other hand, this kind of idealist has a full heart for those who serve the practical work of legislating: James Baker and Ted Kennedy in the old days; Bob Corker and Ron Wyden today. Believing experience is the best mode of education, he favors the competent old hand to the naïve outsider.

The low idealist is more romantic about the past than about the future. Though governing is hard, there are some miracles of human creation that have been handed down to us. These include, first and foremost, the American Constitution, but also the institutions that function pretty well, like the Congressional Budget Office and the Federal Reserve. Her first job is to work with existing materials, magnify what's best and incrementally reform what is worst.

The businessman might be enamored of disruptive change, but the low idealist abhors it in politics. The low idealist liked Obama's vow to hit foreign policy singles and doubles day by day, so long as there is a large vision to give long-term direction.

The low idealist admires a different kind of leader; not the martyr or the passionate crusader or the righteous populist. He likes the resilient one, who maybe has been tainted by scandals and has learned from his self-inflicted wounds that his own worst enemy is himself.

He likes the person who speaks only after paying minute attention to the way things really are, and whose proposals are grounded in the low stability of the truth.

The low idealist lives most of her life at a deeper dimension than the realm of the political. She believes, as Samuel Johnson put it, that "The happiness of society depends on virtue" — not primarily material conditions. But, and this is what makes her an idealist, she believes that better laws can nurture virtue. Statecraft is soulcraft. Good tax policies can arouse energy and enterprise. Good social programs can encourage compassion and community service.

Low idealism starts with a warts-and-all mentality, but holds that people can be improved by their political relationships, so it ends up with something loftier and more inspiring than those faux idealists who think human beings are not a problem and politics is a mostly a matter of moving money around.

What Markets Will

By Paul Krugman

[New York Times](#), October 17, 2014

In the Middle Ages, the call for a crusade to conquer the Holy Land was met with cries of “Deus vult!” — God wills it. But did the crusaders really know what God wanted? Given how the venture turned out, apparently not.

Now, that was a long time ago, and, in the areas I write about, invocations of God’s presumed will are rare. You do, however, see a lot of policy crusades, and these are often justified with implicit cries of “Mercatus vult!” — the market wills it. But do those invoking the will of the market really know what markets want? Again, apparently not.

And the financial turmoil of the past few days has widened the gap between what we’re told must be done to appease the market and what markets actually seem to be asking for.

To get more specific: We have been told repeatedly that governments must cease and desist from their efforts to mitigate economic pain, lest their excessive compassion be punished by the financial gods, but the markets themselves have never seemed to agree that these human sacrifices are actually necessary. Investors were supposed to be terrified by budget deficits, fearing that we were about to turn into Greece — Greece I tell you — but year after year, interest rates stayed low. The Fed’s efforts to boost the economy were supposed to backfire as markets reacted to the prospect of runaway inflation, but market measures of expected inflation similarly stayed low.

How have policy crusaders responded to the failure of their dire predictions? Mainly with denial, occasionally with exasperation. For example, Alan Greenspan once declared the failure of interest rates and inflation to spike “regrettable, because it is fostering a false sense of complacency.” But that was more than four years ago; maybe the sense of complacency wasn’t all that false?

All in all, it’s hard to escape the conclusion that people like Mr. Greenspan knew as much about what the market wanted as medieval crusaders knew about God’s plan — that is, nothing.

In fact, if you look closely, the real message from the market seems to be that we should be running bigger deficits and printing more money. And that message has gotten a lot stronger in the past few days.

I’m not mainly talking about plunging stock prices, although that’s surely telling us something (but as the late Paul Samuelson famously pointed out, stocks are not a reliable indicator of economic prospects: “Wall Street indexes predicted nine out of the last five recessions!”) Instead, I’m talking about interest rates, which are flashing warnings, not of fiscal crisis and inflation, but of depression and deflation.

Most obviously, interest rates on long-term U.S. government debt — the rates that the usual suspects keep telling us will shoot up any day now unless we slash spending — have fallen sharply. This tells us that markets aren’t worried about default, but that they are worried about persistent economic weakness, which will keep the Fed from raising the short-term interest rates it controls.

Interest rates on much European debt are even lower, because Europe’s economic outlook is so bad, and we’re not just talking about Germany. France is currently in conflict with the European Commission, which says that the projected French deficit is too big, but investors — who are still buying French bonds despite a 10-year interest rate of only 1.26 percent — are evidently much more worried about European stagnation than French default.

It’s also instructive to look at interest rates on “inflation-protected” or “index” bonds, which are telling us two things. First, markets are practically begging governments to borrow and spend, say on infrastructure; interest rates on index bonds are barely above zero, so that financing for roads, bridges, and sewers would be almost free. Second, the difference between interest rates on index and ordinary

bonds tells us how much inflation the market expects, and it turns out that expected inflation has fallen sharply over the past few months, so that it's now far below the Fed's target. In effect, the market is saying that the Fed isn't printing nearly enough money.

One question you might ask is why the market's pro-spending, print-more-money message has suddenly gotten louder. My guess is that it's mainly driven by events in Europe, where the slide into deflation and the growing public backlash against austerity have reached a tipping point. And it's very reasonable to worry that Europe's problems may spill over to the rest of us.

In any case, the next time you hear some talking head opining on what we must do to satisfy the markets, ask yourself, "How does he know?" For the truth is that when people talk about what markets demand, what they're really doing is trying to bully us into doing what they themselves want.

Don't Depend On Those Frozen Eggs

By Sarah Elizabeth Richards

[New York Times](#), October 17, 2014

IF you're a woman worried about how to balance work and family, it's a good time to job-hunt in Silicon Valley. This week it was revealed that Facebook and Apple will include egg freezing in their benefits packages. After receiving your job offer, you can order your hormone shots and be on your way to stashing away some good eggs so you can ascend to Sheryl Sandberg-esque greatness and still have a chance of having a biological family in your 40s and beyond.

Reactions to the news have varied from accolades for making the expensive procedure available, to the cynical accusation that corporate America is avoiding creating family-friendly work environments under the guise of reproductive empowerment. Yet amid all the debate over egg freezing's role in women's careers, there has been less talk about the still serious limitations of the medical procedure.

The first generation of women who froze their eggs were hit over the head with warnings not to wait too long to start their families and to think of their frozen fertility as a backup. Such cautions are drowned out by the current enthusiasm — epitomized by information sessions rebranded as "egg freezing parties" and held at swanky hotels. We are forgetting an essential fact: Egg freezing isn't going to work for all women. Success varies according to the expertise of doctors and the quality of eggs, but even the best fertility centers report that a woman's chance of pregnancy per embryo transferred to the uterus is between 30 and 50 percent. The overall chance of success rises if a woman freezes enough eggs for numerous attempts.

It makes sense for a newly divorced 39-year-old to take that risk. But what about the 32-year-old who's encouraged to freeze by her new job perk? Will she make different decisions about work and motherhood that she might later regret?

Since the procedure became available in the United States about a decade ago, fertility doctors have worried that women would put their faith in an unproven technology, postpone having babies until their natural fertility was gone and end up devastated if the eggs didn't work. The American Society for Reproductive Medicine removed the experimental label from the procedure in 2012, but still doesn't recommend it to healthy women who simply want to delay childbearing.

Stereotypes abounded of women buying time to enjoy an extended adolescence of vacations and cocktails or to single-mindedly climb the corporate ladder. But that's not why most women froze. In a survey of 183 "first-wave" freezers who underwent the procedure between 2005 and 2011 at New York University Fertility Center, 88 percent said they were postponing having children because they didn't have a partner, and nearly 60 percent viewed egg freezing as a backup in case they could not get pregnant naturally. Only a small minority saw it strictly as an opportunity to put off having kids until later.

This seems to be changing. Today, a younger set of potential egg freezers are more likely to see the procedure as a ticket to freedom. In a recent online poll of more than 560 women — most of them under 34 — conducted by Cosmopolitan magazine, over half said that, in addition to taking off the pressure to find a partner, they'd consider freezing in order to have as much fun as possible before having kids and so a baby wouldn't derail their career in their 20s and 30s. As a Bloomberg Businessweek cover put it this spring, "Freeze Your Eggs, Free Your Career." (That assumes women don't land that family-unfriendly dream job after the eggs thaw.)

There are no official statistics on how many women have undergone the procedure, but two of the country's oldest and largest programs — Reproductive Medicine Associates of New York in Manhattan and New York University Langone Medical Center — report that their cases have more than doubled in the last two years and that the age of the average freezer has dropped to about 36 from 39 nearly a decade ago. Other doctors say they've seen a stream of even younger patients, some in their 20s.

This is a positive development, since doctors have long urged women to freeze by their mid-30s, rather than wait until their egg quality is deteriorating. More women will have the option, as other companies surely follow Facebook and Apple's example, and as prices continue to drop. The cost of stimulating one's ovaries and surgically extracting anywhere from six to 10 eggs is typically around \$10,000. Many clinics offer lower fees or multi-cycle discounts, and one of the biggest centers charges \$12,500 for up to four cycles or 20 eggs, whichever comes first. But even with that many eggs, there's no guarantee.

Women who are anxious to preserve their fertility during their prime baby-making years should take advantage of every opportunity to freeze. But despite egg freezing's new cool factor, they should never forget its power to disappoint.

Sarah Elizabeth Richards is the author of "Motherhood, Rescheduled: The New Frontier of Egg Freezing and the Women Who Tried It."

Asia's American Angst

By Roger Cohen

[New York Times](#), October 17, 2014

SINGAPORE — Outside China, there is a consistent theme in Asia. It is concern that declining American power, credibility and commitment will leave the way open for Beijing to exercise dominance over the region. President Obama's "pivot to Asia" has been dismissed as hot air. American objectives announced without consequence betray a weak presidency; Asians have drawn their conclusions.

A new Chinese assertiveness in the South China Sea and elsewhere is palpable. By contrast, the United States seems less focused on the region since former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton left office. That, at least, is the perception here in Singapore, one of the world's global cities and a small island-state whose extraordinary economic success is dependent on stability in Asia. That is inconceivable without America as counterbalance to China. But the feeling here, if anything, is that the Obama administration has pivoted away.

Singapore, like much of Asia, is intrigued by the new all-change leadership of Narendra Modi in India. It is doubly intrigued because it sees in Modi the Lee Kuan Yew of India, a man with a near Singaporean commitment to modernity, efficiency and open trade. It is triply intrigued because it seeks a balance of power in Asia and the only possible long-term regional counterbalance to China is India.

That scenario is, however, a distant one. In all aspects but its freedom, a not inconsequential matter, India lags China by a great distance. As Asia waits for the fruits of the magical Modi makeover, the

presence of the United States as a Pacific power retains all its importance. India is inwardly focused. Its global reach is the last concern of the average Indian. A perception of American retreat from its ordering global role has led the smaller nations of Asia to feel more vulnerable to China's systematic push outward in search of resources and control.

Singapore's success has depended on its ability to leapfrog geography, but it could only do that because the geography was not hostile. It could depend on the fact that the foreign territorial waters at its door remained open. Japan has been restrained from going nuclear by the assurance of America's treaty commitment to its defense. From north to south Asia, such assumptions appear a little shakier.

Razeen Sally, a visiting associate professor at the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, wrote this year in Singapore's Straits Times that: "A global city is where truly global services cluster. Business — in finance, the professions, transport and communications — is done in several languages and currencies, and across several time zones and jurisdictions. Such creations face a unique set of challenges in the early 21st century. Today, there appear to be only five global cities. London and New York are at the top, followed by Hong Kong and Singapore, Asia's two service hubs. Dubai, the Middle East hub, is the newest and smallest kid on the block. Shanghai has global-city aspirations, but it is held back by China's economic restrictions — the vestiges of an ex-command economy — and its Leninist political system. Tokyo remains too Japan-centric, a far cry from a global city."

No global city can prosper in an environment where stability appears less certain and freedom in danger of curtailment. That is one reason why America's commitment to Asia matters as China rises — and doubts about America stir unease.

It is not just that the Obama administration's commitment to concluding the Trans-Pacific Partnership, an ambitious free-trade agreement that would include Singapore, Vietnam and Japan among others, has appeared underwhelming. It is not merely that the United States, by some distance, is no longer the main trading partner of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, known as Asean. It is not simply that Chinese maritime bullying in an attempt to assert its right to natural resources in the South China Sea has proceeded unabated.

It is not just that Obama, during his last visit to Asia, gave a very evasive answer to a question about whether by saying the United States would protect the Japanese-administered Senkaku Islands (claimed by China) he risked drawing another "red line." The president said he thought the implication of the question was "that each and every time a country violates one of those norms the United States should go to war, or stand prepared to engage militarily, and if it doesn't then somehow we're not serious about those norms. Well, that's not the case." Try cashing that one at the bank.

It is all of these things, plus an uneasy general feeling. The "pivot to Asia," like the Syrian "red line," like "Assad must go," betrayed a common theme: words without meaning from an American president, commitments without follow-up, phrases without plans. In Asia as in Europe, these things get noted.

The American idea is still strong in Asia. Look no further than the brave pro-democracy demonstrators in Hong Kong. But ideas require commitment to back them.

Traveling While Arab

By Alaa Al Aswany

[New York Times](#), October 17, 2014

CAIRO — Some years ago, I was invited to a literary festival in London whose slogan was "change the world." I had some festival brochures in my hand as I went through the usual entry process at Heathrow Airport. But before I reached the exit, I was surprised to be stopped by a police officer. He

examined my passport and leafed through the brochures. Then he asked, "How do you wish to change the world?"

His demeanor was apprehensive, so I took the question seriously and started explaining, in simple terms, that I was an author invited to the festival, that I had not personally chosen the slogan but it implied changing the way people think by means of writing. He seemed persuaded but, all the same, took my passport and I had to wait half an hour before it was returned.

I could provide scores of similar anecdotes. My literary works have been translated into 35 languages, and so I have traveled to various countries for numerous seminars and book signings. Despite the amicable way I am treated by people in the book world, in airports I am just another Arab, a potential terrorist.

I have no complaint about security measures because they have obviously been instituted for my protection as a passenger. Most security personnel perform their duties in a polite and exemplary manner, but some use the procedures to slight you or to make you understand that you are unwelcome or inferior.

The purpose of customs officers at airports is to catch smugglers, but if you look Arabic, or if you are black, or if you are a woman in a head scarf, they make a beeline for you and ask you a series of provocative questions that I doubt have anything to do with smuggling.

"How many cartons of cigarettes have you got with you?" asked an officer, before she opened my suitcase. I replied that I had a single carton. "Are you sure about that?" she responded with a smirk, implying that I was lying.

I cope with these irritations by considering them part of the hassles of my work, but sometimes it becomes too much. Once, at John F. Kennedy International Airport, I was held for two hours because I objected to the officer's attitude; another time, at Nice, in France, an officer summoned me by curling his index finger, a gesture I find disrespectful. He examined my passport and instead of asking me the purpose of my trip, simply demanded, "What are you doing here?"

"I've come to buy some cows," I told him, in earnest. He looked confused: "Cows? But your passport gives your profession as 'dentist!'"

"There are some dentists," I explained (for that is my professional occupation), "whose hobby is collecting cows, and I'm one of them."

We stood there exchanging sidelong glances until, finally, he returned the passport and let me proceed.

A French police officer of Tunisian origin named Sihem Souid, who worked at Orly Airport in Paris, objected to the racist treatment of Arab and African travelers. She and seven of her colleagues complained about the behavior of other police officers, but nothing was done. Ms. Sihem went on to publish a book, "Omerta dans la police," that exposed the racist practices at Orly, including the story of an African woman whom an officer referred to as a "filthy black," and who was strip-searched and photographed, while the officer looked on, laughing.

Why do some officials mete out this kind of racist treatment at airports?

Clay Routledge, an associate professor of psychology at North Dakota State University, argues that some people crave control, and discriminate against others in order to gratify that desire and boost their self-esteem; for others, racism might provide a stark worldview in which "good" whites and Christians were ranged against "evil" blacks and Muslims. According to the scholar Edward W. Said, in his 1981 book "Covering Islam," Arabs and Muslims were generally portrayed in the Western media as either oil

sheikhs or likely terrorists, while Islam itself was presented as a poorly defined and misunderstood abstraction.

It is true, of course, that terrifying and barbarous crimes committed by terrorists in the name of Islam have cast a shadow over the image of all Muslims. But the most basic rule of justice is that criminal responsibility lies with the individual, and not “by association” with a group that happens to share the same religious or ethnic identity. Can all Americans be held responsible for the torture of Iraqi detainees in Abu Ghraib prison?

In fact, the number of Arab and Muslim victims of Islamic extremist terrorism far exceeds the number of Western victims. In the last two years alone, terrorists in Egypt have killed more than 400 Egyptian police officers and soldiers.

Christianity has had its phases of persecution of so-called heretics, sects, Jews and Muslims, as well as its wars of religion, its inquisitions and crusades. Over centuries, such crimes were carried out in the name of a faith that today preaches love and tolerance. No one religion is more bloodthirsty than another, or has a monopoly on violent extremism. Just as Islam can be followed as a humane religion that urges tolerance, so, too, can it be twisted by some into a belief system that justifies terrorism.

If we want to make this world a better place for our children, we have to teach them that, different as we may be in color, sex, culture or religion, we are all human beings who feel and think and suffer in the same way. We must put aside our prejudices and deal with one another on the basis of equality and individual responsibility. Only then will a black or Arab traveler in a Western airport be treated just like anybody else.

Alaa Al Aswany is the author of the novel “The Yacoubian Building” and other books. This article was translated by Russell Harris from the Arabic.

Bipartisan Solutions, Not Blame, Can Help In Managing Ebola

[Washington Post](#), October 17, 2014

THE EBOLA virus reached this country at the height of the 2014 campaign, so perhaps it was inevitable that the political parties would try to exploit it. To Republicans, the situation proves once again that President Obama has failed to protect Americans. In one of the milder versions of this allegation, Louisiana Gov. Bobby Jindal published an op-ed faulting Mr. Obama for spending Centers for Disease Control and Prevention resources on grants for exercise and healthy diets rather than fighting infectious disease. Some Democrats say, meanwhile, that we wouldn't have to worry about Ebola if not for budget cuts to the CDC and the National Institutes of Health, for which the GOP alone is to blame. As one especially inflammatory TV ad puts it: “Republican cuts kill.”

Refutation of these memes may be a lost cause, but we'll try anyway. In brief: Ebola is no one's “fault.” The United States and other nations should have responded far sooner to the outbreak in West Africa. The CDC could have done a better job managing the situation in Dallas, where exposure to a Liberian patient apparently resulted in the infection of at least two nurses. Yet this is an unprecedented challenge for the American health-care system, and everyone involved — from the president to front-line health-care workers — is acting in good faith and, necessarily, learning on the job.

As for budget cuts, it's preposterous to assert either that more money would guarantee a cure or that one party alone is responsible for the alleged lack of funds. As The Post's Fact Checker, Glenn Kessler, concluded after a thorough examination of the budgetary history: “Obama's Republican predecessor oversaw big increases in public-health sector spending, and both Democrats and Republicans in recent years have broadly supported efforts to rein in federal spending. Sequestration resulted from a bipartisan agreement.”

When you get past the campaign demagoguery, the Ebola problem has actually revealed fundamental agreement between supposedly pro-government Democrats and supposedly anti-government Republicans. The two parties both think that the United States needs an effective federal government to cope with threats such as Ebola. Mr. Jindal argues that “the federal government has one duty above all: To protect the health, safety and well-being of its citizens.” He even maintains that the Constitution’s mandate that the federal government protect the states from invasion “should apply as much to infectious disease as to foreign powers.”

Now that both parties have revealed their preference for effective national government, they can think more clearly about Washington’s budgetary issues. Sequestration is more symptom than cause; the root problem is a general refusal to tackle entitlements, tax breaks and other sacrosanct programs, which leaves the discretionary budget to bear the brunt of deficit reduction. And even if there’s no evidence that budget cuts “caused” the mistakes in the Ebola response, it’s likely that more resources, more thoughtfully allocated, may be needed in the near future. The broader lesson is to readjust federal priorities so that leaders actually have the capacity to prevent and, if necessary, govern through crises — and not just blame each other for them.

The Mayor’s Plan To Replace D.C. General To House The Homeless Is On The Right Track

[Washington Post](#), October 16, 2014

MAYOR Vincent C. Gray (D) released on Tuesday the outlines of a plan to close the city’s shelter for homeless families at the former D.C. General Hospital. A day later, his administration celebrated the opening of a \$450,000 children’s playground at the site. Cutting that ribbon was an acknowledgment of the difficulty the city faces in closing the dilapidated facility. Until other housing alternatives can be found, the shelter remains the last resort for desperate families.

“We know that D.C. General is not an optimum place for families,” said B.B. Otero, deputy mayor for health and human services. “But while families are here, we want to make sure that there’s a safe place for the children to use.”

Mr. Gray is right to try to make the existing shelter as habitable as possible even as he lays the groundwork for its closure. And he is on the right track in mapping a strategy that would replace the 300-room shelter at D.C. General with smaller shelters across the city. Under the plan released Tuesday, by fall 2015 the city would spend an estimated \$52 million to lease or construct six shelters that would each house up to 50 families. The city has already issued a solicitation for potential properties and, according to an administration official, there has been some interest.

But, as critics pointed out, there will be formidable hurdles in finding suitable facilities in a competitive real estate market, and Mr. Gray’s time frame of a year may well be overly optimistic. Neighborhood resistance is likely, too, so it will be important to give the public all the relevant facts. That is the best way to persuade residents that such shelters do not pose a threat. Already in the city are four homeless shelters about the same size as those proposed in Mr. Gray’s plan. Most people don’t even realize they are there; they don’t cause any problems.

Mr. Gray’s plan, issued in the final months of his administration, should be a call to action by the D.C. Council and the next mayor. The goal: to empty D.C. General of the children who made the creation of a playground such a sad necessity.

Obama’s Failing Strategy In Yemen

[Washington Post](#), October 17, 2014

PRESIDENT OBAMA cited Yemen as a model for U.S. operations against the Islamic State last month, not long after he told an interviewer that the intervention in Libya was his greatest foreign policy regret. In fact, the two countries offer similar lessons in the deficiencies of Mr. Obama's strategy. By backing local forces with airpower in Libya, the United States and its allies were able to overthrow a murderous regime — but, as Mr. Obama acknowledged, the failure to assist with building a state afterward has facilitated Libya's collapse into chaos.

Now Yemen appears in danger of disintegrating, as sectarian insurgents backed by Iran capture large parts of the country's north, even while al-Qaeda forces surge in the south. Once again a narrowly focused U.S. engagement has helped make the breakdown possible.

The Obama administration has conducted extensive military operations in Yemen, but they have been strictly aimed at carrying out strikes against al-Qaeda operatives believed to be plotting against the United States. U.S. trainers in the country have worked with counterterrorism forces, eschewing an attempt to build a reliable national army. While U.S. diplomats and envoys such as CIA Director John Brennan helped to broker the political transition that removed former dictator Ali Abdullah Saleh after 33 years in office, only minimal resources have gone toward building Yemeni political institutions, such as courts and civil society.

Now the administration is watching as the political and security order it backed unravels. Insurgents known as Houthis, who adhere to an offshoot of Shiite Islamism, first captured the capital, Sanaa, late last month and dictated terms to U.S.-backed president Abed Rabbo Mansour Hadi. Now they have seized a major Red Sea port that contains Yemen's largest oil refinery and are continuing to advance southward. As government forces crumble or disappear, al-Qaeda is expanding its hold over parts of the south, where an independence movement is also reviving.

A State Department spokesman said Wednesday that the administration is not sure what the Houthis' objectives are; Yemen-watchers believe they could range from forcing changes in a proposed federalization scheme for the country to creating a new state under the Houthis' control. But the movement's hostility toward the United States and its principal allies in the region is not in doubt. U.S. officials believe the Houthis have received materiel and training from Iran; their slogan, including the phrase "death to America," is taken from the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps and Lebanon's Hezbollah. Saudi Arabia, which joined one of the Yemeni government's six military campaigns against the Houthis before 2010, sees the movement as a major threat.

The Houthis' surge may make it impossible for the Obama administration to continue critical operations against al-Qaeda, which reportedly have included 19 drone strikes this year alone. It should force a reexamination of Mr. Obama's model of managing threats from jihadist movements with narrowly focused training and advising of local forces and no effort to help build national institutions. Interventions that ignore the need to create functioning political systems and professional forces that can ensure domestic security only open the door to failed states — and heightened threats to the United States.

Is Sex Only For Rich People?

By Catherine Rampell

[Washington Post](#), October 16, 2014

America has decided: Sex is for rich people. Non-procreative sex in particular.

How else would you explain the trap we're laying for poor people who deign to get it on?

Our country apparently doesn't want low-income Americans to have free access to birth control, either by compelling all insurance plans to offer it or by adequately funding public reproductive health

programs. In many schools — predominantly located in low-income, high-teen-pregnancy areas — we don't even teach kids how contraception works. We also don't want them to have easy access to abortions when they inevitably get pregnant because they're not using birth control, with states such as Texas and Mississippi trying to shutter their few remaining abortion clinics.

Then we don't help them very much after they birth those unplanned kids, instead publicly chastising irresponsible single mothers for having babies they can't afford and offering little assistance in the form of child care, education or cash. Dumping unwanted children onto the child welfare system isn't exactly celebrated, either.

By process of elimination, the solution for low-income people is to never, ever have sex. So seems the logic behind many of these policies: If only we make it harder for people to have access to family planning services, and financially painful to raise children who predictably result from sex in the absence of those services, people who cannot afford to raise children will choose celibacy.

This, of course, is magical thinking. The belief that we can get entire classes of Americans to practice abstinence until they're financially ready for marriage and children is a right-wing delusion on par with the left-wing delusions that go into socialism. Both rely on a fundamental miscalculation about human nature. If the socialists wished to legislate away self-interest, the moralists wish to legislate away libido.

Data show just how difficult it is to keep those unmarried libidos in check. Tawdry though it may be, nearly 9 in 10 young, unwed adults have had sex, according to the National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy.

Which is why subsidies for family planning services make a good deal of sense. And when I say services, I mean not only financial access to contraception but also education about how it works. Study after study has documented astounding amounts of confusion and misinformation about baby-making. One in 5 unmarried young men, for example, incorrectly believes that having sex standing up is a form of birth control. Among women who have unintended births because they weren't using contraception, about a third say they hadn't thought they actually could get pregnant, perhaps because they'd had sex before and never previously landed "in the family way." But who could really blame young'uns for their ignorance and silly extrapolations, when even a former congressman, Todd Akin, once declared that an effective form of contraception is a woman's internal desire to "shut that whole thing down"?

It should be no wonder, then, that more than half of all pregnancies are unintended, and that the proportion is 70 percent for single women in their 20s, as Isabel Sawhill discusses in her thoughtful book, "Generation Unbound: Drifting into Sex and Parenthood without Marriage."

Government spending on family planning offers a huge return on investment, not just for families but for the public. In 2010, every \$1 invested in helping women avoid pregnancies they didn't want saved \$5.68 in Medicaid expenditures that otherwise would have been needed, according to the Guttmacher Institute. Once upon a time, both left and right understood this calculus. Title X, the federal family planning program that primarily serves low-income women (and whose funding has fallen 18 percent over the last decade, after adjusting for inflation) was passed under President Nixon with unanimous Senate support. Today this and other federal programs that democratize family planning (including the Affordable Care Act) are subject to constant gutting and mockery, with pundits referring to advocates of affordable birth control as "sluts," and politicians asking why the state should be subsidizing "recreational" activities like sex.

America is increasingly turning into a two-track society when it comes to fertility decisions, with high-income, highly educated Americans availed of better and more options (even, it turns out, employer-

provided egg-freezing services); and low-income women drifting into childbearing that they themselves say they're not ready for. Despite what opponents say, improving access to family planning services and reversible contraceptives is not about encouraging sex — biology takes care of this already — or that false boogeyman of sterilization. It is about giving low-income women the same control over when, and with whom, they have children, as is afforded to their higher-income sisters.

Stock Market Turmoil And The Global Debt Trap

By Robert J. Samuelson

[Washington Post](#), October 16, 2014

Six years after the onset of the financial crisis, the world still has too much debt. The total in 2013, according to the McKinsey Global Institute, came to about \$186 trillion. This includes government debt, corporate bonds and loans to individuals, families and businesses. Since 2008, the amount has actually increased by about \$34 trillion. The numbers are so large that it's hard for ordinary mortals to connect them with the world economy's ability to grow at a decent and self-sustained pace. Doubts about this underlie the stock market's recent turmoil.

Let it be said that, as with most major market moves, we usually know only in retrospect whether they reflected basic economic realities or just a shift in crowd psychology (Ebola?). "Global outlook [is] nowhere near as bad as markets suggest," Capital Economics, a forecasting firm, wrote clients. This is possible.

If the market's wild swings transcend mood, the explanation may involve the potentially dangerous interaction between high debt and low economic growth. To service their debts, borrowers — governments as well as companies and individuals — need rising income, whether from taxes, profits or salaries. If income stagnates or declines, paying debts' interest or principal becomes harder.

Worse, borrowers and lenders may get caught in a self-destructive, vicious cycle that ends with deflation (falling prices). To make loan repayments, borrowers curb spending. But spending is the lifeblood of modern economies, so if too many governments, people or firms cut back, the economy doesn't generate the income that the debtors need to meet their loan commitments. What's logical for a few debtors becomes catastrophic if everyone does it. There's a debt trap that threatens growth.

By itself, the slowdown in global economic growth, predicted by the International Monetary Fund and others, is fairly mild. It's undesirable but not disastrous. What would make it disastrous is if it triggers a broader and deeper economic pullback: a new recession or financial crisis — involving defaults, bankruptcies and panics. The consequences could be devastating, because the world hasn't yet recovered from the 2008-09 crisis. Any deflation would increase debt burdens by forcing borrowers to repay with costlier money.

A new report from four economists echoes these fears. First, they note that worldwide debt — again, governmental and private — has continued to grow. Since 2008, it has increased from 174 percent of global gross domestic product to 212 percent. The biggest increases occurred among "emerging market" countries, led by China. Its debt soared by 72 percentage points to 217 percent of GDP in 2013. In 2013, similar debt/GDP percentages were 264 for the United States, 257 for the euro zone (the 18 countries using the euro) and 411 for Japan.

As these figures suggest, there's no "right" or "wrong" amount of debt. The correct amount depends on how fast a country's economy is growing, the level of interest rates, how well the debt is invested and — a crucial factor — lenders' faith that they will be repaid. If confidence vanishes, trouble looms.

Called the Geneva Report, the study warns against the “poisonous combination” of high debt and low economic growth. It says that emerging-market countries “could be at the epicenter of the next crisis.” Presumably, this would mean losses on public and private bonds and loans. The study also says the euro zone is vulnerable. (The study’s authors: Vincent Reinhart of Morgan Stanley, Lucrezia Reichlin of the London Business School, Philip Lane of Trinity College Dublin and Luigi Buttiglione of Brevan Howard Investment Products.)

It’s not clear how weak the global economy is. There are (relative) bright spots. Both the United States and Great Britain have achieved moderate growth, in part because their households have “deleveraged” — that is, cut debt. From 2007 to 2013, U.S. households reduced mortgage debt by \$1.2 trillion through repayment and default, says the Geneva Report. Businesses have done something similar: They’ve refinanced old debt at lower interest rates and longer maturities. For households and firms, lower debt burdens free up more cash for present spending.

The roughly 25 percent decline in oil prices since June — most of which will be passed along to drivers at the pump — is another possible positive. Assuming the cuts hold, gasoline prices could drop to close to \$3 a gallon with annual U.S. consumer savings approaching \$100 billion, says oil analyst Larry Goldstein. (However, Goldstein warns that falling prices may signal a faltering economy.)

Can we avoid a global debt trap and regain faster economic growth rates that foster stability and human well-being? Whatever debt’s virtues as a first response to deep slumps, it has its limits. We cannot promote prosperity simply by piling new debts atop the old. We need to build a stronger economic foundation.

Read more from Robert Samuelson’s archive.

Ebola Challenges America’s Ability To Adapt

By Michael Gerson

[Washington Post](#), October 17, 2014

In any health care setting, it is wise to listen to the nurses, who see all. Their reports from Dallas about the initial procedures used in treating Thomas Eric Duncan are appalling. Safety suits with exposed necklines left nurses to cover skin with tape. When tape is removed, it abrades the skin. One health expert I consulted described this practice in dealing with Ebola as “moronic.”

Proper protocols are now in place. But Ebola in America has been an exacting and brutal teacher.

First, we have seen that the infectiousness of Ebola increases as a patient grows sicker and the level of the virus spikes in his or her bloodstream. To the general public, this should provide some reassurance. When a patient begins to feel weak and achy at home, he or she is less likely to spread the disease. None of the people who lived in tight quarters with Duncan has (as of this writing) reported infection.

But for health workers treating very ill patients, the danger of infection is dramatically elevated. Any crack in a glove, any touching of the eye, might be enough. And when a patient’s viral load is sky-high, it is likely to be found even in his or her saliva and mucus. Theoretically, even a cough spraying sputum onto exposed skin might transmit the disease. A person in this condition would be too sick to walk the streets. The risk is to health-care workers who are not properly -protected.

Second, we’ve learned that providing protection to health workers is a skill not possessed by every hospital. Reading a protocol off a Web site is one thing. Implementing a protocol, with perfection as the only acceptable standard, is another. It is the distance between reading a book on batting and taking a pitch in the major leagues. Most hospitals are poorly prepared to take very ill Ebola patients. This

demands either the immediate deployment of federal Ebola “SWAT teams” when a case is reported or the careful transfer of patients to more competent facilities. The hurt feelings of local hospitals or mayors should matter not at all.

Third, we’ve seen that the federal response to Ebola has had serious weaknesses under stress. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention assumed that any large hospital would know what it was doing in isolating an Ebola patient. The assumption was wrong. The CDC allowed a nurse with an elevated temperature who had been heavily involved with Duncan’s treatment to board a plane. This showed inadequate respect for the disease and a tin ear on matters of public trust.

The knowledge and dedication of American public health officials are unequalled. But the implementation and judgment of public health systems have sometimes been seriously flawed.

So how should our political system respond? Not an easy question to answer, especially three weeks before an election. Those who pursue political sport during a health emergency — either finding a symbol of liberal incompetence or a symbol of inadequate public investment — are not helping matters. Fighting infectious disease is an essential federal role, not an ideological metaphor.

The real questions are: Can government learn from its mistakes? And will it be allowed to? The goal is to strengthen the current disease response and be better prepared for the next one (which might, unlike Ebola, involve the serious threat of a large public outbreak in the United States). Somehow, even during a politically charged season, our Ebola debate must be an exercise in learning lessons.

In all this, some perspective is necessary. By the end of the year, according to the World Health Organization, there could be up to 10,000 new cases of Ebola in West Africa each week. Information from inside the affected countries is already growing sketchy as ties to the outside world are cut. This problem will not be solved by canceling the few remaining commercial flights out of Monrovia. The economic, political and social collapse of Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone would swell the flow of refugees and increase the risk of outbreaks in other populous parts of Africa or in even more distant places, such as India.

By all means, do what is necessary in Dallas. But billions in spending and thousands of hospital beds are now urgently required to prevent a human catastrophe involving the destabilization of West Africa. The spread of a global pandemic would make Ebola harder to fight for everyone.

Fight Fear Of Ebola With The Facts

By Richard E. Besser

[Washington Post](#), October 15, 2014

When you work in public health, you become tuned in to fear. And the fear level in the United States just ticked up a notch. All our high-tech equipment, protective gear and disease management didn’t protect two Dallas health-care workers from Ebola. When government officials tell us we are safe and then caregivers get sick, what does this do to trust?

Wearing protective equipment seems straightforward, but it isn’t. When you remove all those layers, you can contaminate yourself, and avoiding that takes training, practice and supervision. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention made a tactical error when it said that any hospital in the United States could safely manage a patient with Ebola if it followed the proper protocol. Sure, any hospital with sufficient training and expertise in handling infectious disease can do this, but it may be that only four U.S. hospitals meet that standard — the ones with specialized units created for this kind of emergency. Transmission in the first regular hospital to treat an Ebola patient stokes fear, and fear is one of Ebola’s most common side effects.

This week, I was scheduled to speak at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland on “Pandemics, Public Health, and Political Change: The Critical Importance of Communication.” I’ve given the talk before. It’s a reflection on how we handled the 2009 flu pandemic when I worked at the CDC, as fear was outracing the disease. The weapons we used to attack the fear — transparency, truth and constant communication — were critical. It helped Americans understand what they were facing and what to do about it, and it helped lessen the impact of the pandemic. Ironically, the university canceled my visit because I had recently returned from a 10-day trip covering the outbreak in Africa. The level of risk posed by my appearance was vanishingly small, but fear won anyway.

Sharona Hoffman, the professor of law and bioethics who invited me, wrote: “Unfortunately, The University President and Provost have decided against having you come to campus on October 15th. Although they understand how small the risk is, they felt that we needed to err on the side of extreme caution because we don’t have the ability to ask all potential attendees if they feel comfortable with the situation.”

Would I like to address the students via Skype? I turned them down. I did not want to feed the idea that anyone who has been to West Africa, even if not sick, poses a risk.

Infectious disease often leads to irrational behavior. It’s a primal defense. We saw this during the early days of the AIDS pandemic, as infected children were barred from schools and some health professionals wouldn’t provide care. We are seeing it again now with Ebola. Proactively, before I returned from Liberia, ABC News addressed employee concerns during a call with experts from the CDC. It made sure that employees could ask questions of some of the world’s leading experts on Ebola transmission. It also made sure anyone who was uncomfortable with my presence knew they could keep their distance.

Most employees have been willing to work with me, but some have chosen not to. I respect their right to make that choice, but I’ve been surprised by how many colleagues have waved from across the room and quickly made an exit. Others won’t enter my office. A colleague told me she received a note from two mothers of children her daughter plays with. Would she be having contact with me at work? If so, they didn’t want her daughter to play with their children for 21 days, the longest known incubation period for Ebola.

My post-Liberia appearance on “The View” was initially canceled because some felt uncomfortable being near me, but it was rescheduled after I appeared on “Good Morning America.” The hosts of “The View” weren’t just trying to make me feel welcome when they hugged me after I walked onto the set — they were trying to reduce fear in everyone.

The best way to fight fear and stigma is with facts. The fact is that many viruses are easily transmitted, but Ebola is not one of them. You can get infected with the flu, the common cold, chicken pox and measles from someone who doesn’t even know that he or she is sick. That is one reason those viruses can spread so quickly. To get infected with Ebola, you need direct contact with the bodily fluids of a patient who is symptomatic of the disease — someone very sick indeed. This is not casual contact. Yes, a nurse and another health-care worker have caught it. In some Ebola outbreaks, 25 percent of cases Ebola are in the medical workers who are taking care of Ebola patients, and the rest are mostly seen in those who provide care in the home and who have touched the bodies of victims at funerals. You cannot get Ebola walking through an airport or speaking to someone with the disease.

It’s natural for people to think, “Wow, even if you’re taking every precaution in the world, like those health-care workers did, you can catch Ebola.” But this is wrong. You are putting yourself in much greater danger if you don’t get a flu shot than if you talk to someone from West Africa.

You cannot catch Ebola in a lecture hall hearing about the power of communication during a public health crisis. I expect universities to fight this kind of fear, not feed it. What we need to do is communicate, as strongly and as often as we can, what the real risks are and aren't.

Nothing To Fear But Panic Itself

By David Ignatius

[Washington Post](#), October 17, 2014

Richard Preston, whose 1994 book "The Hot Zone" brought the Ebola virus terrifyingly to life for readers, once described how, during his research, his biohazard suit had ripped open, exposing him to a potentially fatal toxin.

"I started to feel giddy," Preston wrote in "Panic in Level 4," a 2008 collection of essays. "It was an intoxicating rush of fear, a sensation that all I needed to do was relax and let the fear take hold, and I could drift away on waves of panic, screaming for help."

You could feel a shiver of panic coursing through the American body politic this week as the country struggled with a metastatic set of crises: the spread of the Ebola virus, the surge of Islamic State terrorists and the buckling global economy. Listening to the news, many Americans must have felt a small version of Preston's "intoxicating rush of fear" that the protection layer had been breached.

President Obama tried to speak calmly to a rattled nation on Wednesday, describing how he had kissed and embraced nurses at Emory University Hospital who had treated Ebola patients safely. Don't panic, was the unspoken message. It's safe. Listening to the president, you couldn't help but wonder if he was straining to keep a polarized, fearful country from losing its cool.

Panic is a natural human response to danger, but it's one that severely compounds the risk. Frightened people want to protect themselves, sometimes without thinking about others. Often, they get angry and want to find someone to blame for catastrophe. Inevitably, they spread information without checking whether it's true.

Fear brings out the best in some people and the worst in others. It's a test of character, for individuals and nations. That's why the stories of the New York City firefighters rushing upstairs to their deaths in the twin towers on the morning of Sept. 11, 2001, became a kind of national legend. It showed the human spirit in its most selfless form.

We can't all be heroic firefighters, and this week we began to see a display of less noble emotions. Inevitably, the blame game began: How had Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital misdiagnosed Ebola victim Thomas Eric Duncan and allowed two nurses to become infected? Fair question, but criticism soon escalated to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, probably the world's best resource in combating infectious disease and one of the first responders to the Ebola epidemic. Rather than cheering the firefighters, people were sniping at them.

My own business, the news media, has a peculiar responsibility in times like these. We have to deliver information quickly and reliably, and also hold officials accountable for their performance — all without unnecessarily frightening people or contributing to the kind of hysteria that makes public-health measures more difficult. This role is harder in an unfiltered, Internet-driven media world, where careful reporting can look to some people like suppression of information.

One of the best comments I saw came from Shepard Smith, an anchor for Fox News, a network not always a voice for reason and calm. On Wednesday afternoon, Smith admonished viewers not to panic about Ebola. He was passionate, and maybe you can argue that journalists shouldn't give medical advice, but here's part of what he said:

"Today, given what we know, you should have no concerns about Ebola at all. None. I promise. Unless a medical professional has contacted you personally and told you of some sort of possible exposure, fear not. Do not listen to the hysterical voices on the radio and the television or read the fear-provoking words online. The people who say and write hysterical things are being very irresponsible. . . .

"Suggestions have been made publicly that leaders and medical professionals may be lying to us. Those suggestions are completely without basis and fact. There is no evidence of any kind of which we at Fox News are aware that leaders have lied about anything regarding Ebola. . . . There is no Ebola spreading in America. Should that change, our reporting will change."

Smith was hammered online for telling Fox viewers (and everyone else) to calm down. But he was right. Amazon may be offering books with titles like "Ebola: The Ultimate Survival Guide." But the best advice for now is what Smith offered viewers: Don't panic. And get a flu shot.

On Ebola, We Need A Dose Of Candor

By Eugene Robinson

[Washington Post](#), October 17, 2014

Let's make a deal: We'll all promise not to panic about Ebola if the experts — especially those at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention — agree to get their stories straight.

They should begin by giving a better explanation of why they have concluded it would be wrong to "stop the flights" arriving from the Ebola "hot zone," beginning with the fact that there are no such flights: There is no direct commercial air service between the countries at the epicenter of the outbreak — Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea — and the United States.

Travelers from those countries must make one or more intermediate stops to get here, meaning that any travel ban would have to target individuals based on nationality or recent visits to the affected countries. Experts should explain why this idea is neither crazy nor politically incorrect but simply, in their professional opinion, inadvisable.

The risk that limiting travel to and from West Africa would hamper efforts to control the outbreak is real. Saying that charter flights could be arranged for aid workers ignores the necessarily decentralized and ad hoc nature of responses to this kind of emergency. Doctors, nurses and other volunteers need to be able to go into a hot zone when they are ready, not when seats happen to open up on a charter.

They also need to know beforehand that they will be able to rotate out of the zone in a timely fashion. There is an obvious role that military or charter aircraft can play in evacuating aid workers who have been in close contact with Ebola patients. For those with less risk of exposure — those who, say, could advise health officials in affected countries but not actually treat victims of the disease — travel restrictions would serve no purpose except to make them think twice about going.

With polls showing majority support for some kind of travel ban, CDC Director Tom Frieden and others should not just state their position on the issue but show a willingness to engage with those who disagree. Experts should acknowledge that restrictions might help keep out the Ebola virus in the short run — but would, in their view, put Americans more at risk in the long run.

Pressed at a House committee hearing Thursday about travel curbs, Frieden gave a terse answer: "We will consider any options to better protect Americans." Asked about other countries that have imposed restrictions, Frieden said he was unfamiliar with the details. Really? Wouldn't that be important to know?

Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, did a somewhat better job at the hearing of explaining the consensus view: It is better to interview, track and, if necessary,

quarantine the 100 to 150 travelers entering the United States from West Africa daily than risk the likelihood that at least a few infected people would manage to circumvent any ban.

Health experts also need to explain what went wrong in Dallas, Cleveland and points in between.

With two nurses at Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital in Dallas now being treated for Ebola, it is obvious that normal protocols for dealing with a highly infectious disease are not adequate for this virus. The most urgent task for the CDC and the National Institutes of Health is making sure that health workers nationwide — the Americans most at risk — are armed with procedures and equipment that can keep them safe.

It is understandable, perhaps, that the Dallas hospital was initially unprepared to handle Ebola patient Thomas Eric Duncan and that nurses involved in his early treatment might have been exposed. But now every hospital in the country should be on notice. The vast majority of health-care professionals will never deal with an Ebola case — but cases “could present anywhere,” as Rep. Jan Schakowsky (D-Ill.) said at Thursday’s hearing, which means that all nurses and doctors need to be prepared.

There also has to be an explanation of how the CDC handled the case of Amber Joy Vinson, the second nurse with the virus. First we were told that she should not have traveled home from Cleveland to Dallas on a commercial airliner. Then CDC officials admitted that they cleared her to take the flight, even though she had a fever of 99.5 degrees. Then we learned that she might have been symptomatic — and thus potentially infectious — while on that Frontier Airlines plane.

The thing is, Americans are anxious about Ebola but not panicked. This will change, however, unless experts speak more honestly about the nature of the threat.

Charles Krauthammer: Ebola Vs. Civil Liberties

By Charles Krauthammer

[Washington Post](#), October 17, 2014

Unnervingly, the U.S. public health services remain steps behind the Ebola virus. Contact tracing is what we do, Centers for Disease Control Director Tom Frieden assured the nation. It will stop the epidemic “in its tracks.” And yet nurses Nina Pham and Amber Vinson, who developed Ebola, were not even among the 48 contacts the CDC was initially following.

Nor were any of the doctors and nurses who treated the “index patient,” Thomas Duncan. No one even had a full list of caregivers.

The other reassurance was: Not to worry. We know what we’re doing. We have protocols. When, however, we got the first Ebola transmission in the United States, it was blamed on a “breach in protocol.”

Translation: “Don’t blame us. The nurse screwed up.” The nurses union was not amused. Frieden had to walk that back the next day, saying he didn’t mean to blame anyone.

Frieden had said that “the care of Ebola can be done safely, but it is hard to do it safely.” Meaning: In theory, it’s easy; in practice, very dangerous. Unfortunately, that’s not what he said on Day One. When you hear it two weeks later, you begin to wonder.

These missteps raise questions of competence, candor and false confidence. But the problem is deeper. And it rests not in our doctors but in ourselves.

In the face of a uniquely dangerous threat, we Americans have trouble recalibrating our traditional (and laudable) devotion to individual rights and civil liberties. That is the fundamental reason we’ve been so slow in getting serious about Ebola. Consider:

1. Privacy.

Pham's identity was initially withheld. In normal circumstances, privacy deserves absolute respect. But these are not normal circumstances. We're talking about a possible epidemic by an unseen pathogen that kills 70 percent of its victims. Contact tracing is the key to stopping it, we've been told. What faster way to alert anyone who might have had contact with Pham than releasing her name? Why lose 24 hours during which people have to guess if they'd had contact with someone carrying the virus?

2. Quarantine.

When Duncan was first hospitalized, the CDC said it would locate his contacts and check regularly for symptoms. For the secondary and tertiary contacts, this made sense. But not for those in the inner "concentric circle." They had had close contact with Duncan and were living in an apartment requiring massive decontamination. They should have been quarantined immediately.

Yet initially they were not. In fact, the word quarantine was not uttered by a single authority during the first news conference revealing Duncan's illness.

It's understandable. Quarantine is the ultimate violation of civil liberties. Having committed no crime, having done no wrong, you are sentenced to house arrest or banishment. It's unfair. It's, well, un-American. But when an epidemic threatens, we do it because we must.

3. Evacuation.

Why have we been treating Ebola patients at their local hospital? This is insane. They don't have the expertise or the training. They will make mistakes — as we've now seen repeatedly at Texas Health Presbyterian.

Besides, training and equipping every hospital in America to treat this rare disease would be ridiculously expensive and 99 percent wasted. Every Ebola patient should be evacuated to a specialized regional isolation center, such as the ones in Atlanta, Omaha or Bethesda.

Not because these facilities possess some unique treatment. There is no treatment known to cure the disease. But they know how to prevent contagion. Local hospitals don't. It took 15 days and Amber Vinson to wake the authorities up to this obvious reality.

4. Travel bans.

British Airways has already canceled all flights to the affected countries in West Africa. We haven't. A couple more cases of imported Ebola and we will.

Why are we waiting? The CDC argues that a travel ban would stop the flow of medical assistance to West Africa. This is silly. Simply make an exception for health-care workers. They apply to federal authorities, who charter their flights (or use military aircraft already headed there) and monitor their movements until 21 days after their return home. Done.

President Obama, in his messianic period, declared that choosing between security and liberty was a false choice. On the contrary. It is the eternal dilemma of every free society. Politics is the very process of finding some equilibrium between these two competing values.

Regarding terrorism, we've developed a fairly reasonable balance. But it took time. With Ebola, we don't have time. Viruses don't wait. The sooner we reset the balance — the sooner we get serious — the safer we will be.

Obama Needs To Dial Back His Syria Strategy

By Fareed Zakaria

[Washington Post](#), October 17, 2014

From the start, President Obama's Syria policy has foundered because of a gap between words and deeds. And he's done it again. Having declared that the aim of U.S. policy is to "degrade and ultimately

destroy” the Islamic State, Obama now finds himself pressured to escalate military action in Syria. This is a path destined for failure. In fact, the administration should abandon its lofty rhetoric and make clear that it is focused on a strategy against the Islamic State that is actually achievable: containment.

Escalation in Syria cannot meet American objectives and is almost certain to produce chaos and unintended consequences. The central reality is that Washington has no serious local partners on the ground. It is important to understand that the Free Syrian Army doesn’t actually exist. A Congressional Research Service report points out that the name does not refer to any “organized command and control structure with national reach.” The director of national intelligence has testified that the opposition to the Bashar al-Assad regime is composed of 1,500 separate militias. We call a bunch of these militias — which are anti-Assad and also anti-Islamist (we hope) — the Free Syrian Army.

Scholar Joshua Landis — whose blog Syria Comment is an essential source — estimates that the Assad regime controls about half of Syrian territory, though much more of the population. The Islamic State controls about one-third of the country, and the other militias control a little less than 20 percent. But the largest and most effective of these non-Islamic State groups are al-Qaeda-affiliated and also deadly enemies of the United States. The non-jihadi groups collectively control less than 5 percent of Syria. Landis writes that, according to opposition leaders, Washington is supporting about 75 of these groups.

A U.S. strategy of escalating airstrikes in Syria — even if coupled with ground forces — would wish that the weakest and most disorganized forces in the country somehow become the strongest, first defeating the Islamic State, then the Assad regime, all while fighting off Jabhat al-Nusra and Khorasan. The chance that all this will happen is remote. Far more likely, heavy bombings in Syria will produce chaos and instability on the ground, further destroying Syria and promoting the free-for-all in which jihadi groups thrive.

Critics are sure this policy would have been easy three years ago, when the opposition to Assad was more secular and democratic. This is a fantasy. It’s true that the demonstrations against the Assad regime in the initial months seemed to be carried out by more secular and liberal people. This was also true in Libya and Egypt. But over time, more organized, passionate and religious forces triumphed. This is a familiar pattern in revolutions — including the French, Russian and Iranian. They are begun by liberals and taken over by radicals.

For any strategy to work in Syria, it needs both a military and a political component. The military element is weak. The political one is nonexistent.

The crucial, underlying reason for the violence in Iraq and Syria is a Sunni revolt against governments in Baghdad and Damascus that they view as hostile, apostate regimes. That revolt, in turn, has been fueled by Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Qatar, each supporting its own favorite Sunni groups, which has only added to the complexity. On the other side, Iran has supported the Shiite and Alawite regimes, ensuring that this sectarian struggle is also regional.

The political solution, presumably, is some kind of power-sharing arrangement in those two capitals. But this is not something that the United States can engineer in Syria. It tried in Iraq, but despite 170,000 troops, tens of billions of dollars and David Petraeus’s skillful leadership, the deals Petraeus brokered started unraveling within months of his departure, well before American troops had left. This is not a part of the world where power-sharing and pluralism have worked — with the exception of Lebanon, and that happened after a bloody 15-year civil war in which one out of every 20 people in the country was slaughtered.

The only strategy against the Islamic State that has any chance of working is containment — bolstering the neighbors (who are threatened far more than the United States) that are willing to fight militarily and politically. They include, most importantly, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey and the Gulf states. The greatest challenge is to get the Iraqi government to make serious concessions to Sunnis so that they are recruited into the fight, something that has not happened so far. All of this should be coupled with counterterrorism, which means strikes at key Islamic State targets, as well as measures to track foreign fighters, stop their movements, intercept their funds, and protect the neighbors and the West from a jihadi infiltration spilling over.

The Obama administration is pursuing many elements of this strategy. It should be forthright about its objectives and abandon its grander rhetoric, which is setting itself up for escalation and failure.

Read more from Fareed Zakaria's archive, follow him on Twitter or subscribe to his updates on Facebook.

WILMINGTON NEWS JOURNAL STORIES

Dropping Aetna From Medicaid Means Job Losses

By Jonathan Starkey

[Wilmington \(DE\) News Journal](#), October 16, 2014

About two hundred Delaware-based healthcare jobs will be lost at the end of the year after the state department of Health and Social Services announced Wednesday it will no longer offer Medicaid coverage through one of its managed care organizations, Delaware Physicians Care Inc.

Some employees working with Delaware Physicians Care, an Aetna health plan, will have opportunities to work in other plans in Maryland in Pennsylvania, said Aetna spokesman Walt Cherniak. But by Jan. 1, the 202 jobs associated with the Aetna plan will be gone.

"We're going to be talking to our employees on a one on one basis," Cherniak said. "There will be job reductions, it is just impossible to say right now how many there will be."

About 137,000 Delaware Medicaid patients are enrolled in an Aetna Delaware Physicians Care plan, meaning those patients will have to transfer over to a Highmark or United Healthcare plan when open enrollment begins Nov. 15. Currently, 54,000 Medicaid patients are enrolled in a United Healthcare plan.

Stephen Groff, director of the state's Medicaid program, said the Delaware Department of Health and Social Services will send out supplemental enrollment materials to educate Medicaid patients about their options and "reinforce that they have a choice."

"We'll be identifying those populations that perhaps have the greatest risk or transition needs," Groff said Thursday. "The bottom line is nothing ever goes perfectly and we realize that. It's just very important for people to understand if they have a concern or an issue they need to reach out to us."

Rita Landgraf, DHSS secretary, said the department was ready to move forward with three managed care organizations but financial negotiations failed with Aetna.

"We actually thought three carriers would be the appropriate level," Landgraf said. "Unfortunately at the end of the day we we couldn't come to an agreement with Aetna."

About 230,000 Delawareans rely on Medicaid, an insurance program for low-income residents funded jointly by the federal and state governments. Roughly 200,000 of those patients get care through one of the managed care organizations. More than \$1.6 billion flows through the managed care system in Delaware.

Medicaid is one of the state's largest public expenses, costing state taxpayers about \$700 million annually.

President Obama's health care law expanded eligibility for the program up to 138 percent of the federal poverty level. More than 8,000 newly eligible Delawareans have enrolled since implementation of the expansion last year, and Landgraf expects that number to grow.

The federal government is picking up the vast majority of the cost for those new patients.

Landgraf acknowledged Thursday that dropping Aetna could mean short-term job losses, but suggested many of those workers in direct support roles could find new jobs.

"Those jobs don't go away," Landgraf said. "The other carriers will need to get that level of personnel to support the population. So the jobs themselves don't go away. They just might not be part of that company. I thought that the Aetna team on the ground was exceptional."

Those who choose United Healthcare plans could still be shut out of A.I. du Pont Hospital for Children after contract talks between Nemours and United Healthcare fell apart this spring. Parents of children requiring specialty care were urged to find new providers in Philadelphia or Baltimore.

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Read or Share this story: <http://delonline.us/1sYqNNO>

Delaware Poll: Legalize Marijuana

By Jonathan Starkey

[Wilmington \(DE\) News Journal](#), October 16, 2014

Want legal weed in Delaware?

You're easily in the majority, according to a new University of Delaware poll that finds 56 percent of Delawareans support legalization of marijuana use.

The university polled 902 Delaware adults between Sept. 10 and 22, finding just 39 percent opposed to legalization. Delawareans older than 60 and self-identified conservatives were the only groups to express deep opposition, while young adults and liberals drove the support.

Support for legalization crossed racial and geographic boundaries, with poll respondents in all three counties saying they back legal marijuana.

"I would say the numbers suggest solid support for fully legalizing marijuana in Delaware," said Paul Brewer, the political communications professor at the University of Delaware who supervised the poll. "The results also reflect what's going on in public opinion at the national level, where the trends show a growing majority favoring legalization.

Only Colorado and Washington state have legalized marijuana, regulating and taxing sales. Sixteen other states and the District of Columbia have replaced criminal penalties with fines for those found in possession of small amounts of marijuana, a step known as decriminalization.

Voters in several other states will consider ballot measures next month to loosen marijuana laws.

Of course, public support does not always accurately predict political support. Gov. Jack Markell remains opposed to full legalization of the drug, a spokeswoman said on Thursday.

"Since last year, the governor and his office have been talking with legislators and others about decriminalizing the possession of a small amount of marijuana and replacing criminal penalties with civil fines," said Kelly Bachman, Markell's spokeswoman.

"While the governor would not support full legalization at this time without further studies and evidence of its consequences, he expects to have more conversations about reducing the criminal penalties on small amounts of marijuana in the months to come."

The poll does show a breakdown along generational and ideological lines.

Opposition to legal marijuana was most pronounced among Delawareans aged 60 or older. Just 36.9 percent of respondents in that age group favored legalization, while 68 percent younger than 30 supported the move.

Among respondents who identified as conservative, just 39.2 percent favored legalization. Among liberals, 73 percent said they think marijuana should be legal.

Across the rest of the poll, support is significant. Majorities of minorities and white Delawareans support legalization. Voters in all three counties support making the drug legal, though the margin is slim in Sussex County, Delaware's most conservative county.

In Sussex, 48 percent of respondents said they would support legalization, while 47.3 percent said they oppose the move.

"The poll just shows there is broad support for this," said Delaware Sen. Bryan Townsend, a Newark Democrat who favors legalization of marijuana. "I hope this is a wake-up call to the General Assembly that a majority of Delawareans support us moving in this direction."

Directing criminal justice resources to combat marijuana is a distraction to addressing more problematic drug crimes and substance abuse.

"I think we should be focusing on addiction," Townsend said. "We should be focused on crime. We should be focused on community safety. Marijuana does not really seem to relate closely to any of those things."

Legislation introduced earlier this year by state Rep. Helene Keeley, of Wilmington would have allowed Delawareans to legally possess up to an ounce of marijuana for personal use, without regulating and taxing sales of the drug.

Facing political opposition, that bill was scrapped.

A House committee later passed separate legislation from Keeley that would have replaced criminal penalties with \$250 civil fines for anyone 21 or older in Delaware found in possession of an ounce or less of marijuana.

Current Delaware law prosecutes simple marijuana possession as a misdemeanor, punishable by fines of up to \$1,150 and up to six months in jail.

In 2013, Delaware police made 2,632 arrests for petty marijuana possession, charged as an unclassified misdemeanor, including 298 charges involving juveniles, according to the Delaware Criminal Justice Council's Statistical Analysis Center.

Keeley, who faces an opponent in November, said Thursday that if re-elected she intends to introduce a decriminalization bill when the General Assembly returns in January.

"The governor has said that he would not sign a legalization bill at this time," Keeley said. "I would still like to continue the dialogue. Even just decriminalization is a step in the right direction."

Lt. Gov. Matt Denn, the frontrunner to become Delaware's next attorney general is also in the camp opposed to legalization.

Denn said while he supports removing criminal penalties for possession, he can't get behind promoting use of the drug.

"I don't want our scarce criminal justice system resources being used to prosecute people for possession of small quantities of marijuana, but I do want my 9-year-old boys to understand that it is bad for them and they shouldn't use it," Denn said by email on Thursday.

Todd Kitchen, a marijuana user and legalization activist, said he is not surprised by broad support for legalization of the drug, despite the smaller steps being taken politically.

Kitchen helped push for the legalization of marijuana for medical purposes in 2011.

A 2005 car accident left Kitchen with traumatic brain injury, anxiety and severe back pain caused by a form of arthritis that he uses marijuana to soothe.

The state's first medical marijuana dispensary is scheduled to open early next year outside of Wilmington.

"A lot of people have been trying to change the attitude toward it and get out correct information to re-inform the public," said Kitchen, who says marijuana has a calming effect and leads to less violent behavior than alcohol.

The poll results, Kitchen said, shows "people are listening. They realize it's not as bad as they thought it was."

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M&T Bank Advertising Deceptive, Agency Says

By Maureen Milford

[Wilmington \(DE\) News Journal](#), October 16, 2014

At the same time M&T Bank of Buffalo deals with the fallout from its 2011 acquisition of Wilmington Trust Co., it has been hit with accusations of deceptive advertising from a checking account campaign.

The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau has taken action against the bank for luring customers with the promise of free checking accounts from 2009 to 2012 with advertisements such as "M&T Totally Free Checking No minimum Balance. No monthly service charge." The agency was established by the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act of 2010 to carry out federal consumer financial laws.

What the bank failed to disclose was that customers had to maintain a minimum level of deposits and withdrawals, according to the consent order. When consumers had no account activity for 90 days, the bank automatically converted the accounts to so-called M&T First accounts.

The M&T First accounts carried a monthly maintenance fee of \$5 to \$14 unless the average account balance was more than \$1,500 or if the consumer's combined balances of checking, savings and deposits was more than \$1,500, the order says. The only notification that the accounts had been switched was when "M&T First" appeared on account documents, according to the agency. According to the order, M&T converted approximately 80,903 free checking accounts to M&T First accounts, and approximately 59,041 customers were charged fees.

According to the order, M&T assessed approximately \$2.94 million in monthly maintenance fees on these converted accounts. It collected from approximately \$2.045 million of those fees from customers.

M&T has agreed to a consent order without admitting to the agency's findings. It has agreed to refund approximately \$2.045 million to affected customers and pay a \$200,000 civil penalty.

C. Michael Zabel, group vice president with M&T in Buffalo, said there is no impact on accounts acquired from the purchase of Wilmington Trust Co. in 2011 because M&T "did not advertise to them."

Darren J. King, M&T's executive vice president for retail and business banking, said more than two years ago, the consumer protection bureau changed the way certain rules and regulations were to be interpreted.

"And under that new interpretation, they indicated a concern about the way one of our checking products was marketed. We immediately changed our policies and procedures in response, and we have cooperated fully with their inquiry," King said. "The regulatory environment has evolved, and our policies and procedures have evolved as well, not just to meet the regulators' new expectations, but also to meet the highest expectations of our customers."

This latest action comes on the heels of a settlement reached last month with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission. Wilmington Trust reached an agreement to pay \$18.5 million to settle charges that it made false and misleading disclosures about its past-due loans over multiple quarters in 2009 and 2010.

Since 2013, Wilmington Trust has been embroiled in a criminal investigation by the U.S. Department of Justice that has led to six prosecutions. Three prosecutions involve former bank officials. In addition, shareholders have been pursuing a federal civil lawsuit against former Wilmington Trust directors and officers alleging they conspired to fraudulently conceal hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of past-due and non-performing loans.

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Read or Share this story: <http://delonline.us/1sYnSEU>

News Journal Keeping Needs Of Readers In Mind

By David Ledford

[Wilmington \(DE\) News Journal](#), October 16, 2014

We're reorganizing our news operation for the future – mindful that we've been privileged to serve Delaware daily since 1871 because our staff knows and cares about this state.

The realignment is necessary to meet the needs of more and more readers who consume news through digital channels. Delawareonline.com, easily the state's leading news web site, has enjoyed tremendous success, and we're restructuring our team to improve your experience on desktop, mobile and tablet.

In coming months we'll have more reporters working the state, and you'll see from them a greater sense of urgency. Their charge is to be more entrepreneurial in nature than in the past, depending as much on tips from readers as assignments from editors. So if you have an idea, or a slice of perspective you feel is missing from a story as initial reports roll onto delawareonline.com, please make your voice heard.

The News Journal stands on the bedrock of watchdog reporting, which we know from market surveys is the No. 1 priority of Delaware readers. I talk to readers almost every day and most recognize, as we do, that the success of our report is predicated on the quality of the ideas we pursue. Readers expect stories they can't get anywhere else, and they expect that work to be presented in innovative ways.

The two-day series we published last weekend, "Paladin Club Massacre," illustrates the way we'll present deep stories in the Newsroom of the Future.

It had a huge presence in Sunday and Monday editions of The News Journal and a magazine-like look at delawareonline.com's desktop, mobile and tablet platforms – with video, photographs and a graphic embedded among the chapters.

Before the work was posted online, reporter Cris Barrish alerted readers on Twitter and Facebook that it was coming. Once it was published, reader comments poured in.

So no matter how you consumed the content, our intent was to improve your experience.

That's the future. And we see our digital products getting more sophisticated.

We have a delawareonline.com app for the iPhone, an app for Android, an app for the iPad, and a brand new app for coverage of the Philadelphia Eagles.

If you're already a subscriber, you can also read our print edition online.

Speaking of subscribing, you can do so at delawareonline.com/subscribe.

The printed newspaper will continue to be delivered – and sold by vendors statewide –seven days a week. Yet as we restructure, you will notice better responsiveness to your ideas from reporters and editors. You'll get better community coverage. There's a new beat designed to chronicle solutions – the best ideas bubbling up from citizens and governments. There will be more energy on stories that have statewide impact and new focus on the creative ideas coursing through Delaware.

The professionals on our staff are looking at a range of new opportunities in our organization to help bring you this kind of journalism. To effect this change we have streamlined management and consolidated some production jobs. But we are breathing new life into the reporting ranks, ensuring that we continue to have far more boots on the ground than any other news organization statewide.

Again, our strength is our people – journalists who know and care deeply about Delaware.

Thank you, Delaware, for the trust you've placed in us the past 143 years. We view it as a privilege to continue daily delivering the news in a place we love.

David Ledford

Read or Share this story: <http://delonline.us/1w9OvFF>

Delaware Colleges To Waive Application Fees

By Matthew Albright

[Wilmington \(DE\) News Journal](#), October 16, 2014

Delaware's colleges will waive application fees for in-state students who apply during the state's College Application Month, which started this week and runs through Nov. 21.

Delaware Tech and Wilmington University have waived fees for students participating in the program for two years. They will be joined this year by the University of Delaware and Delaware State University, Gov. Jack Markell's office announced Thursday.

"I applaud our universities for working to make their admissions process as accessible and encouraging to our students as possible," Markell said in a statement. "With good jobs increasingly requiring education or training beyond high school, addressing obstacles to a college application is vital."

Students can apply to Wesley College and Goldey-Beacom College without charge, which means no Delaware senior will owe application fees to the state's six colleges and universities, Markell's office said.

This year, every high school in the state is participating in College Application Month, which allows students to apply for colleges during the school day.

State officials say the fee waivers are important because they often discourage students from low-income families from applying, even if those students have the potential to succeed once they enroll.

Students applying to UD should be sure to select "Yes, I participated in the UD Senior Search Program." Students applying to Delaware state should select "request a fee waiver" on the "submit and pay" screen."

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Read or Share this story: <http://delonline.us/1sXJVvm>

No Polar Vortex In NOAA Winter Forecast

By Jeff Montgomery

[Wilmington \(DE\) News Journal](#), October 16, 2014

Most of the nation is unlikely to see a repeat this winter of the polar vortex invasions that made for icy headaches through late 2013 and early this year, the nation's climate forecasters said Thursday.

"Last year we saw a very recurrent pattern with very persistent cold air outbreaks. At this point there's nothing that indicates we'll see a repeat of that," said Mike Halpert, acting director of the Climate Prediction Center in the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

"The likelihood that we'll see it as persistent as we saw it last year is fairly low," Halpert said.

Although some forecasting agencies have pointed to signs of a colder-than-average year, the Mid-Atlantic and east-central part of the country have an even chance of the season being colder or warmer than usual.

Much of California, meanwhile, faces continuation of an ongoing and historic drought, with dry conditions continuing into spring.

That contrasts with moderate expectations with above-average rainfall across the south and along the entire East Coast.

State College-based Accuweather recently predicted a colder-than-average winter and possibly more snow or rain than usual, an outlook partly related to expectations that water temperatures in the equatorial Pacific will warm and set up moderate El Niño conditions.

NOAA officials said Thursday that conditions are "flirting" with an El Niño, with only a weak pattern likely.

El Niño's effect on the Northeast's climate remains uncertain, however.

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Plan For New Delaware Container Port Could Create 4,000 Jobs

By Maureen Milford

[Wilmington \(DE\) News Journal](#), October 16, 2014

An effort to expand the Port of Wilmington to a 176-acre site on the Delaware River in New Castle will move forward Friday with a public forum expected to reveal preliminary findings of a \$100,000 feasibility study.

Based on a draft of the study obtained by The News Journal, the proposed \$400 million to \$500 million development being pushed by the International Longshoremen's Association would be a viable option for keeping the port competitive for the next 50 years or more.

The study for the longshoremen by maritime advisory company Paul F. Richardson Associates Inc., says a privately financed port development in Riveredge Industrial Park just south of the Delaware Memorial Bridge would allow Delaware to compete for cargo with regional ports in New York/New Jersey, Baltimore and Norfolk, Va., and has the potential to create "vast employment opportunities."

"This project is critical to creating good-paying blue-collar jobs that will help restore the middle class in Delaware," said Ronald "Kimoko" Harris, business agent with International Longshoremen's Association Clerks and Checkers Local 1883, whose members work to load and unload cargo.

Harris estimates the project could create 4,000 new high-paying jobs. Longshoremen are among the highest-paid blue collar workers in the country, with some earning more than \$100,000 a year.

The event to be held at the Sheraton Suites Wilmington Downtown Hotel will detail the mechanics of a development, according to according to Ed Zimny, a principal in Richardson Associates Inc., of Holmdel, N.J.

New Castle County Executive Tom Gordon, who has championed the project since returning to office, will also attend the 10 a.m. forum.

"It's a necessary project for Delaware to succeed and grow the middle class and reduce crime in Wilmington by giving people an opportunity to have livable wages," Gordon said.

The presentation will include a question and answer session designed to involve environmental groups, neighbors, labor and public officials. Information gathered from these “stakeholders” will be incorporated into a final report that is expected to be released in November or December,

An expanded port has been a vision of the longshoremen’s locals 1883 and 1694 for about eight years. The longshoremen have been concerned about the transformation of the shipping industry with the advent of a new global fleet of mega-ships that can carry almost double the containers of the previous generation of ships. The larger ships require larger, more modern terminals.

These mega-vessels have a capacity of 7,500 to 12,000 container units as measured by the standard 20-foot container (TEU). By the end of 2016, there will be more than 770 container ships of over 7,500 TEU, compared to 628 ships today, according to HJ Tan of Alphaliner, a shipping research company in Singapore.

To handle these large cargo ships, port terminals need huge ship-to-shore gantry cranes on foundations able to support the heavier loads, Zimny said.

The existing Port of Wilmington doesn’t handle vessels with a capacity much larger than 3,000 TEU, Zimny said.

The concept for Riveredge calls for a single large pier, or dock, at Riveredge with seven or more berths for ships, Harris said. With six or more large container cranes, the port could work on the larger container ships. According to Harris, container work is the highest-paying cargo for longshoremen.

The site, which has been owned by Parkway Gravel for 20 years, has enough space to accommodate warehouses. The Gordon administration also envisions capitalizing on the existing rail line near the properties to tie the Riveredge operation with the Port of Wilmington and the former General Motors assembly plant on Boxwood Road near Newport.

The Boxwood location, the former Fisker Automotive site that the county has offered to buy, would serve as a central location for the distribution to retailers of goods and products by rail or highway.

Access to I-295 is right outside Riveredge Industrial Park. The plan calls for the rail line that runs through Riveredge to be connected to the Port of Wilmington. The rail system at the Port of Wilmington connects to the Boxwood Road plant, connecting all three sites by rail.

The concept envisions a public-private partnership that would likely have a long-term arrangement between a public port authority and a private company. The private company would develop and operate the port for 30 years or more, the draft of the study says.

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176: Number of acres a new port would cover.

\$400 million: Estimated cost of the project.

4,000: Estimated jobs the port would create.

7: Number of ship berths handling biggest container ships.

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Strine Appoints Panel To Review Court System

By Sean O'Sullivan

[Wilmington \(DE\) News Journal](#), October 16, 2014

WILMINGTON – Following through on his State of the Judiciary address in June, Delaware Supreme Court Chief Justice Leo Strine Wednesday released a 12-page administrative directive that aims to review, and potentially reshape and downsize significantly, parts of the state’s court system.

In short, the directive calls for the creation of a new panel to review the effectiveness and efficiency of the “specialty” or “problem-solving courts” and if the courts “warrant continuation.”

The panel, which is made up of judges and is supposed to report back by June, also has been charged with identifying means “to consolidate, eliminate or revise the mandate” of more than a dozen criminal justice policy organizations like Sentencing Accountability Commission, the Criminal Justice Council and the Criminal Justice Reinvestment Oversight Group.

The directive notes, as Strine did in June, that some of these groups have overlapping or inconsistent mandates.

Strine said this effort is “a positive thing.” And while supporters of the specialty courts – that include drug court, mental health court and the veterans’ court – were concerned by Strine’s comments in June, he said that was like people who get an “A-” and focus on the minus.

The specialty courts often give defendants who meet certain criteria a chance to resolve their charges pre-trial – and avoid conviction – if they agree to therapy or treatment.

Strine said he supports the idea of these courts “but what we are talking about is using taxpayers’ resources and the resources of our partners (like Probation and Parole) more efficiently.”

The chief judge said the goal of the review is not to eliminate the courts but to evaluate, modernize, streamline and ultimately better codify them so they become more a matter of “law not lore” and ensure that the gut feelings of people who support such courts are backed up with data.

Right now some of the specialty courts operate differently in different counties. The drug court, for example, is overseen by a court commissioner in Sussex County but it is overseen by a judge in New Castle and Kent counties. The Strine directive calls for the panel to “develop statewide standards, rules of procedure and outcome measures to govern their operation and measure their performance.”

Strine added that the specialty courts should perhaps operate in a more cooperative way. A defendant in drug court may also be a veteran. A person with mental health issues may also have substance abuse issues. And some people in veterans’ court may have both drug and mental illness issues.

Strine acknowledges that it is somewhat ironic that in order to pare down what he sees as overlapping and inconsistent functions he has created a new committee – The Criminal Justice Council of the Judiciary, made up of 15 state court judges – but he sees the committee as a necessary vehicle to get the job done.

New Castle County Superior Court Judge William C. Carpenter Jr. will head this new review committee along with Superior Court Judge Jan R. Jurden, who spearheaded creation of the mental health court and served on the veterans court in New Castle County. Superior Court Judge William L. Witham Jr., who founded the veterans court in Delaware, is also on the committee.

Strine said he hopes the end result of the process – hard data about the effectiveness of programs and specialty courts – also will help the court system make more persuasive arguments when the court goes to the legislature to seek additional funding.

At the same time, Strine made it clear he expects to find cost savings through the review process.

One issue, however, may be that some of the policy committees that Strine is looking to consolidate may have been established by the legislature, governor or federal mandates.

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White House Official Visits, Lauds Prestige Academy

By Matthew Albright

[Wilmington \(DE\) News Journal](#), October 16, 2014

David Johns stood in the middle of the cafeteria at Prestige Academy Charter School in Wilmington and had the students repeat after him.

"I am brilliant. I am beautiful," they shouted. "I am resilient. I can be anything I choose to."

There are few more places Johns, executive director of the White House Initiative on Education Excellence for African Americans, could have visited. He is crossing the country spreading the word about My Brother's Keeper, President Barack Obama's effort to improve education and workforce training for young black men.

Prestige is Delaware's only public all-boys school, serving almost entirely low-income minority students.

"This is the only school in the state that is unapologetically and intentionally focusing on young men of color," Johns said.

Delaware's black students, like the rest of the country, face more than their share of educational problems.

Even as the state brought its dropout rate to a 30-year low last year, black students still faced a 4 percent annual dropout rate, almost twice that of white students.

Only 59 percent of black students scored "proficient" in reading on the state's standardized test last year, compared to 82 percent of white students, and only 54 percent scored proficient in math, compared to 84 percent of white students.

The problems are especially acute for black male students, who are much more likely to be shooting victims and face prison time and other social problems that derail their potential.

Started in January, My Brother's Keeper is the Obama administration's call to find models around the country for ways to break this cycle for young black men. The program calls for community members to step up as mentors and advocate for those students.

"I know you guys encounter things on the way to school that would cause even some adults to say 'I quit,'" Johns told the students. "But if you hear me say nothing else, hear me say I'm proud of you. And we as a country need to do a better job supporting you."

Johns took questions from the students and teachers, which ranged from what it was like to work in the White House to what the administration was doing to lower the number of black teens shot and killed by police officers.

Jack Perry, the school's executive director, encouraged students to ask Johns tough questions and give him their honest opinions.

"No other young men can speak about your situation better than you can," he said.

Johns visited Wilmington on his way to a national educational summit in Philadelphia. He came at the request of City Councilman Darius Brown, whose son attends Prestige.

"We are making great strides toward equitable urban education," Brown said. "But there is more we need to do before we have truly great learning neighborhoods."

Johns praised the students for their sharp attire.

"Next time the president needs help with his tie, I know who to send him to," he said.

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Read or Share this story: <http://delonline.us/1sYmOAT>

Coming Soon: Low-digit Surf Fishing Tags

By Jeff Montgomery

[Wilmington \(DE\) News Journal](#), October 16, 2014

For the surf-caster with everything but a trophy catch, Delaware's surf-fishing program soon will offer some bragging rights consolation: Trophy Tags.

Gov. Jack Markell signed legislation Thursday authorizing the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control to sell or auction 1,000 low-digit plates for surf-fishing vehicles.

State officials said the affinity plate sales – inspired by longstanding interest in low-digit auto tags – will raise money for Division of Parks and Recreation operations and maintenance, especially at ocean parks. The state park system discontinued sale of numbered tags in 1994, but collectors and fishing enthusiasts have shown continuing interest.

"This legislation has the potential to be a strong revenue source to benefit our state parks," Gov. Jack Markell said in written remarks.

"This year, more than 14,000 surf tags were sold, generating about \$1.3 million for our state parks. So not only is this legislation a revenue-raiser for our parks, it appeals to parks users who have an affinity for low digit tags – and we in Delaware know that will appeal to a large number of potential buyers."

Delaware's low-digit tag culture peaked in 2008, when motor vehicle tag No. 6 sold for an astonishing \$675,000 at auction.

Under the surf fishing tag program – expected to begin by Memorial Day 2015 – state parks officials will conduct a live, annual auction during the spring or early summer for a limited number of tags. An online auction will follow allowing bids on up to 100 tags at a time. Non-numbered tags will continue to be available, however.

Contact Jeff Montgomery at 463-3344 or jmontgomery@delawareonline.com.

Read or Share this story: <http://delonline.us/1sYgWrr>

Wilmington Defines Possible Development District

By Yann Ranaivo

[Wilmington \(DE\) News Journal](#), October 16, 2014

Wilmington officials want a 223-acre area that spans parts of downtown and nearby neighborhoods on the west and east sides to receive a state designation expected to spur revitalization of urban blocks.

The city's application for the state's new Downtown Development District initiative shows that city leaders are targeting significant redevelopment in an area that is roughly bounded by Locust, 11th, Fourth and Adams streets. The southernmost part of the district includes a small area that juts out between Shipley, King and Second streets.

Wilmington has until Nov. 1 to submit its application to the state, but City Council on Thursday voted 11-0 for a resolution backing the plan.

"I think it's appropriate," Council President Theo Gregory said. "I think it was inclusive."

Planning and development Director Leonard Sophrin said the proposed area was drawn with the idea of improving pedestrian traffic among downtown and the adjacent neighborhoods. Projects in the district, which could be residential, commercial or mixed use, would keep people in the city after the typical 5 p.m. work day.

"We are looking to bring the neighborhood and downtown life together. They had to be connected," Sophrin said. "We are rebuilding the relationship between neighborhoods and downtown itself."

The state's budget this year includes \$7 million to revitalize downtown areas. The state will select one community in each county for the initial designations.

The designation allows projects in the Downtown Development Districts to become eligible for some state reimbursements and a variety of local incentive packages.

Sophrin said the incentives and reimbursements could create cost savings that allow developers to take on more projects, whether they be in the district itself or elsewhere in the city.

"This is a pilot in many ways," he said.

Gregory said he likes the proposed designated area because it is comprised of blocks that are socioeconomically and ethnically diverse.

Contact Yann Ranaivo at (302) 324-2837, yvanaivo@delawareonline.com or on Twitter @YannRanaivo.

Read or Share this story: <http://delonline.us/1wa4rYI>

WILMINGTON JOURNAL NEWS EDITORIALS

Goals Should Be To Improve Courts

[Wilmington \(DE\) News Journal](#), October 16, 2014

Delaware Supreme Court Chief Justice Leo E. Strine Jr. clearly telegraphed his intentions, but his action Thursday took a number of court observers by surprise.

Chief Justice Strine issued an order to create a panel that would take a close look at what are called "problem-solving courts." These include drug, mental health, re-entry and veterans courts. They are designed to do what the unofficial name implies – to solve problems rather than to dispense harsh justice. He foreshadowed the move in his state of the judiciary address earlier this year.

The chief justice wants his special "Criminal Justice Council of the Judiciary" to examine the effectiveness of these courts and to develop rules of procedures, as well as consistent standards. He also wants the council to help determine which of these courts "warrant continuation." That means the panel should decide which specialty court should be kept open and which should be closed. This last idea sent shudders down the spines of some supporters of the courts.

However, we should take the chief justice at his word and support the council's examination of the courts. Several of these courts have won public recognition for keeping minor offenders out of jail and for steering drug users, for example, to rehabilitation. It does not make sense to put people who are mostly wrecking their own lives in prison when they could be steered to other paths.

It would be good to know how effective the courts are, whether they are actually doing what they were intended to do and whether they are operating efficiently. For example, as the chief justice pointed out in his directive, an offender could end up in both drug and veterans courts. Chief Justice Strine asked whether it would be better to make sure only one court handles the case. The chief justice, in his directive, said the goal is "identify which of the so-called 'problem-solving courts' have demonstrated sufficient utility in terms of public safety, the rehabilitation of offenders and the efficient of the judicial system to warrant continuation."

We believe that "problem-solving courts" make sense. However, they have developed rapidly over the past two decades and now exist in every state. The forms they take and the outcomes they bring about vary widely. Standards may sound like an innovation-squelching idea, but this is a justice system we are talking about. Much is at risk, not only for society, but also for the offenders in court.

Legal experts around the country have begun to question these very things. Critics have called it a "custom justice" system.

Chief Justice Strine's examining committee could put those questions and criticisms to rest.

We believe that the Delaware “problem-solving courts” actually have solved problems and kept people out of jail. The job should be to make them more effective.

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VICE PRESIDENTIAL *NEWS CLIPS*

PRODUCED FOR THE OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT

TO: THE VICE PRESIDENT AND STAFF
DATE: FRIDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2014 -- 6:15 AM EDT

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BIDEN IN THE NEWS

Biden Touts Infrastructure Work In Philadelphia

[Associated Press](#), October 16, 2014

PHILADELPHIA — Investing in the country's infrastructure is needed for the kind of jobs workers can "raise a middle class family on," Vice President Joe **Biden** said during a trip to Philadelphia on Thursday.

Biden toured a dredging barge being used in a 102.5-mile project to deepen a shipping channel that stretches from the Ben Franklin Bridge to the Delaware Bay and is meant to bring larger container ships to the port.

Such infrastructure enhancements are "what we desperately need in this country now" to promote manufacturing and jobs, **Biden** said.

"Where's it written that the United States will not be the manufacturing capital of the world in the 21st century?" **Biden** asked a small crowd gathered in front of the barge. "Manufacturing is coming home for the United States."

The \$300 million project would deepen the 40-foot Delaware River channel to 45 feet. It started in March 2010, but work on the 2.5-mile section in Philadelphia just started last month. Officials are aiming to complete the entire deepening in 2017.

The 40-foot channel "cuts us out of a whole lot of commerce. It cuts us out of a whole lot of new jobs if they cannot come up the Delaware River," **Biden** said. "We can't afford to be left out of this. The dredging project here is going to have a profound economic impact when it's finished."

The project would add jobs and increase construction along the river, he said.

"The average person rides over the (Ben Franklin Bridge) and they look down and they have, understandably, no idea how much of their economic well-being depends on what happens at this port," **Biden** said. "We need this work, we need this port."

Biden was joined by U.S. Sen. Bob Casey and U.S. Reps. Chaka Fattah and Bob Brady, all Pennsylvania Democrats.

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Biden In Phila. To Promote Port, Dredging

By Chris Palmer

[Philadelphia Inquirer](#), October 17, 2014

Vice President **Biden** toured a dredging barge at Penn's Landing on Thursday to show support for the project to deepen the Delaware River shipping channel.

Biden, the latest high-profile politician to visit the region in recent days, was flanked by a phalanx of Pennsylvania Democrats – U.S. Sen. Robert P. Casey Jr., and U.S. Reps. Robert A. Brady and Chaka Fattah.

Before delivering remarks on the ongoing deepening of the Delaware, **Biden** and the delegation were taken on a tour of the large barge by Brian Puckett, project manager for Great Lakes Dredging & Dock Co.

The vessel's main feature, a dredging bucket that can haul as much as two dump trucks, immediately caught **Biden's** eye.

"That's a hell of a bucket," the vice president said after walking a gangplank onto the ship.

Biden's visit was to highlight the project, which aims to deepen about 100 miles of the waterway between the Delaware Bay and Philadelphia.

Initiated in March 2010, the project could be completed in 2017, according to Ed Voigt, a spokesman for the Army Corps of Engineers.

Biden noted that the effort will allow larger container ships to travel the river, which he called essential for economic development.

"We need this work," he said. "We need this port."

Biden said Brady has been an enthusiastic advocate for the project – even calling his cellphone while **Biden** was on a trip to Germany.

President Obama has proposed \$35 million for the project in his 2015 fiscal budget. The overall cost for the multiyear deepening will likely be around \$300 million, Voigt said.

Biden said the project will not only keep the Philadelphia port competitive, but will help support middle-class jobs and extend the legacy of the waterway.

"The Delaware River has been the heart of commerce for this valley for 300 years," he said.

Michelle Obama and Hillary Clinton each visited Philadelphia to campaign for Democratic gubernatorial candidate Tom Wolf, and New Jersey Gov. Christie stopped at Valley Forge Military Academy and College last week to stump for a fellow Republican, Gov. Corbett.

President Obama is also expected to campaign for Wolf in Philadelphia before the Nov. 4 election.
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Biden Barges In: VP Visits Philly Waterway

[NBC News](#), October 17, 2014

Vice President Joe **Biden** toured a dredging barge with Great Lakes Dredge & Dock members on Thursday, at Penn's Landing along the Delaware River in Philadelphia. **Biden** discussed the importance of investing in the nation's infrastructure during his visit to the waterfront.

VP Biden Visits Philadelphia To Check Progress Of Delaware River Dredging Project « CBS Philly

By Mike DeNardo

[KYW-TV Philadelphia](#), October 16, 2014

PHILADELPHIA (CBS) — Vice president Joe **Biden** toured a dredge boat along the Delaware riverfront today, to promote the ongoing project to deepen the river's shipping channel.

Biden said the dredging project to deepen the Delaware River channel to 45 feet has to continue if the Port of Philadelphia is to remain competitive.

In his speech at Penn's Landing, **Biden** said 135,000 area jobs are directly and indirectly linked to the ability of ships to navigate the Delaware.

Until the project is completed, **Biden** says, Philadelphia will lose some business:

"It cuts us out of a whole lot of commerce — cuts us out of a whole lot of good jobs if they cannot come up the Delaware River."

The dredging job, already more than halfway finished, needs 76 million federal dollars over the next two fiscal years.

Project manager Brian Puckett, of the Illinois-based Great Lakes Dredge and Dock Company, says that would be money well spent.

"It's absolutely imperative for our economy," Puckett said today.

VP Joe Biden Visits Penn's Landing

[WCAU-TV Philadelphia](#), October 17, 2014

Vice President and Delaware-native just landed in the city of Brotherly Love. He'll address the public on the importance of improving infrastructure.

Biden Speaks On Infrastructure In Philadelphia

[WPVI-TV Philadelphia](#), October 17, 2014

Vice President Joe **Biden** says investing in the country's infrastructure is needed to support what he called "good paying jobs you can raise a middle class family on."

Biden Travels To Burlington County For Belgard Fundraiser

By David Levinsky

[Burlington County \(NJ\) Times](#), October 16, 2014

MAPLE SHADE — Vice President Joe **Biden** paid a visit to Burlington County on Thursday to lend some fundraising help to Democrat Aimee Belgard's 3rd Congressional District campaign.

Biden headlined a private fundraiser for Belgard at Sensational Host caterers on Route 73. The event was closed to the press, but the Democrat's campaign released a statement from the Burlington County freeholder and a photo from the event.

"I'm thrilled that Vice President **Biden** visited Burlington County today to support my congressional campaign," Belgard said in the statement. "His leadership and support were really inspiring to our supporters as we are less than three weeks from Election Day. Our campaign, which is one of the most competitive in the country, has great momentum with our strong fundraising quarter, tremendous grassroots support and it was further bolstered today by Vice President **Biden's** strong commitment to join us in our fight for middle-class families."

Belgard is running against Republican Tom MacArthur for the open seat of Rep. Jon Runyan in the 3rd District, which is made up of almost all of Burlington County and a large portion of Ocean County.

The race was picked early on to become one of the most competitive House contests in the nation and one of the best pickup opportunities for Democrats to flip a seat to their column.

But a poll released Tuesday by Monmouth University gave MacArthur, a former insurance CEO, a 10-point edge among likely voters with another 6 percent still undecided.

Campaign finance reports submitted to the Federal Election Commission on Wednesday showed Belgard had raised more than \$1.4 million as of Sept. 30, but her campaign was still being outspent by MacArthur thanks in large part to \$4 million in loans the Republican made to his own campaign.

The Democratic Congressional Campaign also has spent more than \$1.2 million on cable television advertisements attacking MacArthur and his former company, York Risk Services.

Belgard's campaign did not release the amount of money raised at Thursday's event.

The Burlington County freeholder previously has received fundraising help from House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi as well as New Jersey U.S. Sen. Cory Booker.

Biden's visit came the day after President Barack Obama was scheduled to travel to New Jersey for a private Democratic fundraiser in Union County. Obama canceled the trip in order to meet with his cabinet to coordinate a response to the domestic Ebola crisis.

First Lady, VP To Stump For Minnesota Democratic Candidates

By Kevin Jacobsen

[KBJR-TV Duluth \(MN\)](#), October 17, 2014

St. Paul, MN (NNCNOW.com) – Several of Minnesota's Democratic candidates are expected to get some big name support next week.

Michelle Obama will make a stop in the Twin Cities during the week stumping for Senator Al Franken and Governor Mark Dayton.

On Thursday, Vice President Joe **Biden** will travel to Hibbing for a rally to help Representative Rick Nolan.

Just last Friday, Former President Bill Clinton was in Minnesota to lend his support to Gov. Dayton and Sen. Franken.

New Jersey Governor Chris Christie, meanwhile, campaigned with Minnesota's Republican Gubernatorial candidate, Jeff Johnson on Monday.

Biden Will Head To Boston

By Allison Sonfist

[NECN-TV Boston](#), October 17, 2014

Vice President Joe **Biden** will be at two fundraisers in Boston, Massachusetts, later this month.

One will be for Martha Coakley's gubernatorial bid. The other is for the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee.

Meanwhile, Coakley is hoping her campaign will get a boost from a visit by former President Bill Clinton. Clinton is scheduled to be at Clark University in Worcester on Thursday.

President Barack Obama has endorsed Democrat Gina Raimondo for Rhode Island governor. Late Wednesday, the White House, however, announced Obama was canceling Thursday trips to Rhode Island and New York to monitor the government's Ebola response.

For up-to-the-minute news and weather, be sure to follow us on Twitter and like us on Facebook. Sign up for our new breaking news email alerts by clicking [here](#).

The Vice President Has Nothing To Apologize For

By Alfonse D'Amato

[Long Island \(NY\) Herald](#), October 17, 2014

The vice president has nothing to apologize for

Nassau County's source for local news, breaking news, school district updates sports, entertainment and shopping

Vice President Joseph **Biden** has been wrongly forced to embark on a Middle East apology tour in the wake of statements he made regarding the U.S.'s allies in the Middle East.

The vice president's troubles began a couple of weeks ago, during a question-and-answer session at Harvard University. He stated that the biggest problem the U.S. faces in the region, in dealing with Syria and the rise of ISIS, is our allies.

"They poured hundreds of millions of dollars and thousands of tons of weapons into anyone who would fight against Assad," **Biden** said, referring to Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, "except that the people who were being supplied were Al Nusra and Al Qaeda and the extremist elements of jihadists coming from other parts of the world."

The vice president stated the facts. This is what the Turks, Saudis and Emirates did — they armed the enemy. Turkey's porous borders have allowed thousands of terrorist militants to cross into Syrian and Iraqi battlefields. Even with the Islamic State taking control of Kobani, a Syrian town right on the Turkish border, Turkish troops watched through a chicken-wire fence.

Turkey's president, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, will not make a firm military commitment to the U.S., and refuses to send troops across the border as massacres are taking place less than a mile away. This is how one of our allies is supposed to act?

After apologizing to Turkey, **Biden** was then forced to issue the same apology to Saudi Arabia. Imagine that. After stating the obvious, that Turkey has allowed foreign fighters to cross into Syria, **Biden** said that Turkey, the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia had funneled weapons and other aid to extremist groups.

Remind me, what's wrong this statement? It was nothing but the truth.

While Saudi Arabia and the UAE take part in airstrikes against the militants in Syria, they also use U.S. arms and protection to nurture, protect and finance terrorist organizations.

There's no doubt in my mind that the Saudis are playing this game two ways. As our men and women risk their lives overseas to stop the brutality taking place in Syria and Iraq, the Saudis continue to aid and abet terrorist organizations.

The media should be ashamed for the way they jumped all over **Biden**. This was no gaffe. He never should have had to apologize, and this latest media hoopla has turned political correctness to hypocrisy. If anyone owes anyone an apology, it is our government, which should be apologizing to the public for not using our power and clout to force our allies to truly combat terrorism.

Erdogan, our supposed ally, tells us that he refuses to send in ground troops because a no-fly zone has not been set up in Syria. This comes at a time when ISIS is expanding its control over Syria less than a mile from his border. Despite the fact that there were 19 U.S.-led airstrikes, ISIS militants continue to gain control of Kobani. As the brutal battle rages on, Turkey continues to sit and watch, because Erdogan believes that the U.S. should be fighting Assad's forces with the same strength and energy as it is combating ISIS.

What kind of ally refuses to play its part, and allows a major threat to America's national security to gain more ground? Mr. Vice President, politics may have forced you to apologize, but Americans should know about the duplicity of our so-called allies.

Meanwhile, the Ebola virus has claimed its first victims in the U.S. Why has there not been more action from the Obama administration?

A carrier of the virus may not show symptoms for up to 21 days, meaning that even someone who appears to be healthy could be spreading the virus. This is a great threat to the New York area, considering that John F. Kennedy International Airport is one of five airports used by a majority of people who fly to the U.S. from West Africa.

The airport screening is playing Russian roulette, and nothing more than a ploy to placate the legitimate concerns of the American public. No one should be permitted to come here from those countries in West Africa where the Ebola epidemic is rampant.

Al DAmato, a former U.S. senator from New York, is the founder of Park Strategies LLC, a public policy and business development firm. Comments about this column? ADAmato@liherald.com.

An Early Look At Joe Biden And Mariska Hargitay's New Domestic Violence Campaign

By Alyssa Rosenberg

[Washington Post](#), October 16, 2014

The USA Network is well known for its so-called “blue sky” series. USA shows are set in locations with great weather, such as Miami and the Hamptons, and feature exceedingly good-looking (and diverse) casts bantering and displaying high levels of competence. But these sunny exteriors have more serious underpinnings.

Broadcast networks have tried to diversify their casts in recent seasons, recognizing that characters of color and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) characters who get to have relationships can be a significant audience draw. They are latecomers to the strategy, though: USA (and the CW, another smart, under-covered network) has been working at becoming more representative for years. Five USA series have regular or recurring LGBT characters (two of those series have non-white LGBT characters). Six have significant characters of color.

Showrunners on USA Network shows also often meet with people who work in the field, whether at advocacy groups such as the NAACP and GLAAD or the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. This is hardly uncommon practice, though networks do not usually take pains to explain to viewers what parts of their favorite shows were inspired by real-life conversations. USA frequently does so in public service announcements that air during the relevant broadcasts.

The network even recruited President Obama to tape an introduction to “To Kill a Mockingbird” when USA re-aired the classic courtroom drama, and former President Bill Clinton shot a similar spot for “Philadelphia.”

USA's latest get is Vice President Joe **Biden**, who draws on his experience drafting the Violence Against Women Act, which became law in 1994, for a PSA series with “Law & Order: Special Victims Unit” star Mariska Hargitay, which will air during a marathon of that series this weekend. The network gave me an early look at one of the three spots that will be part of the campaign to share with you:

Maile Zambuto, chief executive of Joyful Heart, Hargitay's foundation for survivors of sexual assault, domestic violence and child abuse, helped pick the episodes that will be airing in the marathon, which is pegged to the No More campaign. **Biden** and Hargitay are wearing No More buttons in their PSA.

“Selecting episodes for the marathon was a collaborative process,” Zambuto wrote in an e-mail. “Mariska, the NO MORE team, USA Network, writers and producers worked together to identify episodes that speak to different aspects of these issues—teen dating violence, campus sexual assault, male sexual abuse, the cycle of violence.”

The hope is that survivors recognize that they are not alone — and that the people who might be in a position to help victims of such violence recognize abuse and assault for what they are.

“Domestic violence is never the victim’s fault,” **Biden** says in the PSA. After a fall dominated by coverage of Ray Rice’s assault on the woman who is now his wife, during which the Baltimore Ravens tried to paint the altercation as a fight between equals, that message is one worth broadcasting loudly, and not just to hard-core “Law & Order: SVU” fans.

Joe Biden And Mariska Hargitay Team Up Against Campus Rape

[People](#), October 17, 2014

In this season of college homecomings coinciding with Domestic Violence Awareness Month, Vice President Joe **Biden** and Law & Order: SVU star Mariska Hargitay have teamed up to tell victims of campus sexual assault that the powerful duo has got their backs.

“Know that it’s not your fault and you’re definitely not alone,” Hargitay says in a new public-service announcement debuting Sunday during USA Network’s SVU marathon.

“We stand with you,” adds **Biden**, “because one is too many.”

The video, produced for the NO MORE movement by Hargitay’s Joyful Heart Foundation, is just the latest in a string of costarring roles for **Biden** and Hargitay, who share a commitment to combatting abuse of women.

“Joe **Biden** started the Violence Against Women Act 20 years ago and he was truly a visionary,” Hargitay told David Letterman earlier this month. “Our missions are aligned and we have come together and done a bunch of work.”

That included flying on Air Force Two – “a huge thrill for me,” she says – to visit the National Domestic Violence Hotline headquarters in Texas last year.

“The crimes on Law & Order: SVU are sometimes fictionalized,” Hargitay says in the PSA. “But sexual violence on college and university campuses is all-too real. And we cannot stand by while it happens.”

“It’s time,” says **Biden**, “for all of us to speak up and end sexual assault.”

Jill Biden To Campaign For Nunn In Georgia

By Justin Sink

[The Hill](#), October 17, 2014

Second lady Jill **Biden** is heading to Georgia on Friday for a series of fundraisers and campaign events for Democratic Senate candidate Michelle Nunn.

Polls show Nunn gaining momentum in her race against GOP businessman David Perdue to replace retiring Sen. Saxby Chambliss (R).

Biden will attend three fundraisers during her two-day stint in Atlanta: an event for the Democratic National Committee and two that directly benefit Nunn’s Senate campaign. The second lady and Nunn will also appear together at a community service event at the Fort Street United Methodist Church.

With the president’s approval ratings sinking to record lows, Democrats have relied on other administration officials — including the Bidens and first lady Michelle Obama — to shoulder the brunt of campaign activities, especially in toss-up districts.

Georgia represents one of the party’s best opportunities to take a seat from Republican control. A pair of polls from WRBL and SurveyUSA released this week have shown Nunn with a small lead over Perdue.

But Nunn has worked to distance herself from the president. Earlier this week, she refused to answer when a tracker from Republican research group Rising Response tried to ask if she had voted for President Obama.

Jill Biden to raise money for, campaign with Michelle Nunn

By Daniel Malloy

[Atlanta Journal-Constitution](#), October 16, 2014

Dr. Jill **Biden**, wife of Vice President Joe **Biden**, is headed to Atlanta on Friday to raise money for the party and Democratic U.S. Senate hopeful Michelle Nunn. The two also will appear at a community service-themed event.

Here's the itinerary the White House just sent over:

[Friday] evening, Dr. **Biden** will attend an event for the Democratic National Committee at a private residence [in Atlanta]. This event is closed press.

On Saturday, Dr. **Biden** will attend the Hands On Atlanta event with Michelle Nunn at the Fort Street United Methodist Church. Dr. **Biden**'s remarks at 9:00 AM are open press.

At 11:30 AM, Dr. **Biden** will attend an event for Michelle Nunn at a private residence. This event is closed press.

At 3:30 PM, Dr. **Biden** will attend an event for Michelle Nunn at The Sound Table. This event is closed press.

Joe **Biden** appeared with Nunn earlier this year, as did First Lady Michelle Obama. We don't expect to see the fourth member of the quartet, President Barack Obama, at her side.

Biden's Son Hunter Discharged From Navy Reserve After Failing Cocaine Test Lawyer Pursued Military Service Relatively Late as a Public-Affairs Officer

By Colleen McCain Nelson And Julian E. Barnes

[Wall Street Journal](#), October 17, 2014

Full-text stories from the Wall Street Journal are available to Journal subscribers by clicking the link.

Biden's Son 'Embarrassed' Over Navy Ouster

By Helene Cooper

[New York Times](#), October 17, 2014

WASHINGTON — Hunter **Biden**, the younger son of Vice President Joseph R. **Biden** Jr., failed a drug test and was discharged this year from the Navy Reserve, people familiar with the matter said on Thursday.

Mr. **Biden**, 44, tested positive for cocaine, those people said.

In a statement provided by his lawyer, Thomas M. Gallagher, Mr. **Biden** said that he was "embarrassed that my actions led to my administrative discharge." He added that he respected the Navy's decision.

Mr. **Biden** was commissioned as an ensign on May 7, 2013, and assigned to a public affairs reserve unit in Norfolk, Va.

He called it "the honor of my life to serve in the U.S. Navy," adding "I deeply regret" the actions that led to being discharged. "With the love and support of my family, I'm moving forward," he said in the statement.

A person close to the decision said that Mr. **Biden** was not treated differently from any other Navy Reserve sailor.

Mr. **Biden** was tested for drugs in June 2013, after he reported to his unit in Norfolk, and the result was positive for cocaine, according to the people familiar with the matter. The Navy said he was discharged in February.

It was unclear why Mr. **Biden** decided to join the Navy Reserve while in his 40s. He needed a waiver because of his age. He received a second waiver because of a drug-related incident when he was young, said the people familiar with his discharge, which was first reported in The Wall Street Journal.

Mr. **Biden**'s brother, Beau **Biden**, served in the Delaware Army National Guard and was deployed to Iraq for a year. Beau **Biden** now serves as the Delaware attorney general and plans to run for governor in 2016.

Hunter **Biden**, who is married with two children, is a lawyer and a partner at Rosemont Seneca Partners, an investment company. In May, he was appointed to the board of Burisma Holdings, a Ukrainian energy company.

Mr. **Biden**'s mother and his younger sister were killed in an automobile accident in 1972, in which he and his brother were seriously injured.

Biden's Son 'Embarrassed' By Discharge From Navy After Drug Test

By Ryan Parker

[Los Angeles Times](#), October 17, 2014

Hunter **Biden**, son of Vice President Joe **Biden**, said Thursday night that he was embarrassed by the Navy Reserve's decision to discharge him, which the Navy reportedly did because he tested positive for cocaine.

He was discharged in February after testing positive in June 2013, one month after being commissioned as an ensign, according to a source familiar with the situation, ABC News reported.

In a statement to the Los Angeles Times, **Biden**, 44, said he was trying to move on with his life.

"It was the honor of my life to serve in the U.S. Navy, and I deeply regret and am embarrassed that my actions led to my administrative discharge," **Biden** said. "I respect the Navy's decision. With the love and support of my family, I'm moving forward."

Neither Hunter **Biden** nor his attorney had additional comments.

Hunter **Biden**, an attorney and managing partner of the investment firm Rosemont Seneca Partners, is the second son of the vice president. His brother, Beau **Biden**, is the Delaware attorney general.

The vice president's office declined to comment on Hunter **Biden**'s situation.

Follow Ryan Parker for breaking news at @theryanparker and on Facebook.

Biden's Son Discharged From Navy Reserve

By David Jackson

[USA Today](#), October 17, 2014

Hunter **Biden**, the son of the vice president, was discharged from the Navy Reserve this year after testing positive for cocaine, The Wall Street Journal reported Thursday.

"It was the honor of my life to serve in the U.S. Navy, and I deeply regret and am embarrassed that my actions led to my administrative discharge," the younger **Biden** said in a statement released by his attorney.

"I respect the Navy's decision," **Biden** said. "With the love and support of my family, I'm moving forward."

Hunter **Biden** in 2008(Photo: Suchat Pederson, The News Journal)

The Wall Street Journal first reported on **Biden**'s cocaine test, citing "people familiar with the matter."

Biden, a lawyer, is now a managing partner in an investment firm.

Navy spokesman Ryan Perry said **Biden** became a reserve officer through the Direct Commission Officer program in 2012.

"In May 2013, he was assigned to the Navy Reserve unit for Navy Public Affairs Support Element East in Norfolk, Va.," Perry said. "Ens. **Biden** was discharged from the Navy Reserve in February 2014. Like other junior officers, the details of Ens. **Biden**'s discharge are not releasable under the Privacy Act."

Biden's Son Discharged From Navy After Positive Cocaine Test

By Katie Zezima And Missy Ryan

[Washington Post](#), October 16, 2014

Vice President Joe **Biden**'s son Hunter was discharged from the Navy Reserve after testing positive for cocaine, a source familiar with the matter confirmed Thursday.

The source spoke anonymously because no permission had been given to speak publicly about a personnel issue.

The Wall Street Journal reported Thursday that **Biden** was discharged earlier this year after failing a drug test in June 2013. A lawyer and former lobbyist, **Biden** was commissioned as an ensign in the Navy Reserve in 2013. He applied for a commission into the reserve as a public affairs officer at age 42. Because of his age, **Biden** needed a waiver to apply. The Journal reported he needed a second waiver because of a drug-related charge when he was younger, a request that is not unusual.

"It was the honor of my life to serve in the US Navy, and I deeply regret and am embarrassed that my actions led to my administrative discharge," Hunter **Biden** said in a statement. "I respect the Navy's decision. With the love and support of my family, I'm moving forward."

Vice President **Biden**'s office declined to comment.

The Navy declined to confirm that **Biden** tested positive for cocaine use. Commander Ryan Perry, a Navy spokesman, said in a statement that **Biden** had been selected for his commission in 2012, and discharged in February 2014. "Like other junior officers, the details of Ens. **Biden**'s discharge are not releasable under the Privacy Act," he said.

Hunter **Biden** was one of seven applicants accepted in 2012 for a direct commission, which allows professionals to join the Navy only by applying and attending a training course. The applicants must complete medical screenings and a security clearance. They are then sent to a 12-day program in Rhode Island that "prepares degreed and often highly experienced professionals to assume Navy Reserve Duty leadership positions in any of a broad range of critical career focus areas" including law and engineering.

"This year, I'm looking forward to standing with our son, Hunter, when he is commissioned as an ensign in the United States Navy," Jill **Biden** said in 2012. "He follows in the footsteps of two of his grandfathers, who have also served in the Navy."

Hunter **Biden** made news earlier this year when it was announced that he would join the board of Burisma Holdings, Ukraine's largest private gas firm. The announcement came shortly after Russia annexed Crimea, while Vice President **Biden** was engaged in diplomatic talks with the country. At the time, Vice President **Biden**'s office stressed that his son was a private citizen.

"The vice president does not endorse any particular company and has no involvement with this company," Kendra Barkoff, a spokeswoman for Vice President **Biden**, said at the time.

Hunter **Biden** is the younger of the vice president's two sons. His other son, Beau, is the attorney general of Delaware and is running for governor. Beau **Biden** is a major in the Delaware National Guard.

Hunter Biden Discharged From Navy Reserve For Positive Cocaine Test

By Douglas Ernst

[Washington Times](#), October 17, 2014

Hunter **Biden** has been discharged by the Navy Reserve after testing positive for cocaine use.

The military career of Vice President Joseph R. **Biden**'s son ended earlier this year after only having been commissioned as an ensign on May 7, 2013, The Wall Street Journal reported Thursday. Mr. **Biden** had been assigned to Navy Public Affairs Support Element East in Norfolk, Virginia.

Mr. **Biden**, who now works for the Ukrainian energy company Burisma Holdings Ltd., said in a statement that it was "the honor of my life to serve in the U.S. Navy, and I deeply regret and am embarrassed that my actions led to my administrative discharge. I respect the Navy's decision. With the love and support of my family, I'm moving forward," The Journal reported. He also serves as a managing partner the investment company Rosemont Seneca Partners.

The vice president's office declined to comment for the paper's story.

It is not known what kind of discharge Mr. **Biden** was given, although a failed drug test would eliminate the possibility of receiving an "honorable" discharge. The most likely outcome for him would have been "other than honorable" or "general" discharge, the Journal reported.

Biden's Son Discharged From Navy Over Drug Use

[Associated Press](#), October 17, 2014

WASHINGTON – Hunter **Biden**, the youngest son of Vice President Joe **Biden**, has been kicked out of the military after testing positive for cocaine, two people familiar with the matter said Thursday.

Biden, a former lobbyist who works at an investment firm, was discharged from the Navy Reserve in February, the Navy said in a statement. The service did not give a reason for **Biden**'s discharge barely a year after he was selected for the part-time position as a public affairs officer in the Navy Reserve.

In a statement released by his attorney, **Biden** did not give a reason for his discharge. He said he respected the Navy's decision and was moving forward with his family's support.

"It was the honor of my life to serve in the U.S. Navy, and I deeply regret and am embarrassed that my actions led to my administrative discharge," he said.

The vice president's office declined to comment.

Biden's attorney didn't respond to inquiries about whether **Biden** had used cocaine. But two people familiar with the matter said **Biden** was discharged after he failed a drug test last year. They weren't authorized to discuss the incident and requested anonymity.

The Wall Street Journal first reported **Biden**'s discharge and failed drug test.

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Biden's Son Discharged From U.S. Navy Reserve After Drug Test: Sources

By Andrea Shalal

[Reuters](#), October 17, 2014

Full-text stories from Reuters currently cannot be included in this document. You may, however, click the link above to access the story.

Report: Joe Biden Son Failed Navy Drug Test

By Nick Gass

[Politico](#), October 17, 2014

The Navy Reserve discharged Vice President Joe **Biden**'s son Hunter earlier this year after he tested positive for cocaine, according to a Wall Street Journal report posted Thursday.

According to the report, Hunter **Biden**, 44, failed a drug test in June 2013 before his discharge in February. **Biden**, who needed a waiver to join the Navy at 43, reportedly needed another waiver because of a drug-related issue at an earlier age.

Biden, who held a part-time position as a public affairs ensign, expressed deep regret and embarrassment for his actions. He currently works as managing partner of an investment company.

"I respect the Navy's decision. With the love and support of my family, I'm moving forward," he said in a statement.

The vice president's office declined comment to The Wall Street Journal. It's not clear whether **Biden** received an honorable discharge.

Report: Biden's Son Discharged From Navy After Failing Cocaine Test

By Peter Sullivan

[The Hill](#), October 17, 2014

Hunter **Biden**, the son of Vice President **Biden**, was discharged from the Navy Reserve this year after testing positive for cocaine, The Wall Street Journal reports.

The paper reports that after joining the Navy as an ensign in 2013, he reported for duty in Norfolk, Va. He was drug tested in June 2013 and the test was positive for cocaine, according to the paper's sources.

Hunter **Biden** was discharged in February of this year.

"It was the honor of my life to serve in the US Navy, and I deeply regret and am embarrassed that my actions led to my administrative discharge," said **Biden** in a statement. "I respect the Navy's decision.

"With the love and support of my family, I'm moving forward," he added.

Hunter **Biden** is now managing director at Rosemont Seneca Technology Partners.

His brother, Delaware Attorney General Beau **Biden** also has a military record, serving in his state's National Guard. Beau **Biden** was also deployed to Iraq while in the guard.

—This story was updated at 7:28 p.m.

Biden's Son Discharged From Navy After Testing Positive For Cocaine

By Eric Bradner

[CNN](#), October 16, 2014

Washington (CNN) – The Navy Reserve discharged Vice President Joe **Biden**'s son Hunter this year after he tested positive for cocaine, U.S. officials confirmed.

The discharge of **Biden**, a 44-year-old lawyer and managing partner at an investment firm, was first reported by the Wall Street Journal on Thursday. He confirmed the report in a statement to CNN.

"It was the honor of my life to serve in the U.S. Navy, and I deeply regret and am embarrassed that my actions led to my administrative discharge. I respect the Navy's decision. With the love and support of my family, I'm moving forward," he said.

Biden was commissioned as an ensign in May 2013 and assigned as a public affairs officer in a Norfolk, Virginia-based reserve unit. A month later, he tested positive for cocaine, and he was discharged in February, according to the report.

The U.S. official said the Navy never had contact with the vice president's office over the issue, and that standard procedure for failed drug tests is administrative discharge. The vice president's office didn't comment on the report.

Hunter **Biden** is the younger of **Biden**'s two sons. His older brother, Beau **Biden**, is Delaware's attorney general and a major in the Delaware Army National Guard. He was deployed for a year in Iraq.

CNN's Barbara Starr and Jim Acosta contributed to this report.

Biden's Son Discharged From Navy After Reportedly Testing Positive For Cocaine

By Ed Henry

[Fox News](#), October 16, 2014

The son of Vice President Joe **Biden** says he is "embarrassed" after being discharged from the Navy Reserve earlier this year --- reportedly after testing positive for cocaine.

The Wall Street Journal, citing people familiar with the matter, reported Thursday that Hunter **Biden's** short-lived military career ended because he failed a drug test after reporting to his unit in 2013. According to the Wall Street Journal, the Navy discharged him in February of this year.

Biden said in a statement to Fox News that he respects the Navy's decision but did not specify why he was discharged.

"It was the honor of my life to serve in the U.S. Navy, and I deeply regret and am embarrassed that my actions led to my administrative discharge," he said. "I respect the Navy's decision. With the love and support of my family, I'm moving forward."

Biden, 44, made the decision to join the military late in life. According to the Wall Street Journal, **Biden** was commissioned as an ensign in the Navy Reserve in 2013 after deciding the previous year to join the service as a public affairs officer.

However, **Biden** was given a drug test after reporting to his unit at Navy Public Affairs Support Element East in Norfolk, Va. and tested positive for cocaine, the Wall Street Journal reported. According to the paper, the Navy would not specify what sort of discharge he was given.

Vice President **Biden** spoke about his son's decision to join the Navy late in life at the American Legion's Salute to Heroes Inaugural Ball in 2013, joking that his son's decision was a result of poor judgment.

"We have a lot of bad judgment in my family," **Biden** said. "My son over 40 just joined the Navy to be sworn in."

Hunter **Biden** is a lawyer who serves as a managing partner for a Rosemont Seneca Partners, an investment firm. He made headlines earlier this year when he was hired to be a director and lawyer for a Ukraine company promoting energy independence from Moscow.

The move raised eyebrows, as Vice President **Biden** and others in the Obama administration have attempted to influence energy policies and other issues of the Ukrainian government as it battles Russia and pro-Russian separatists to control the county.

The vice president's spokeswoman, Kendra Barkoff, has said that **Biden's** son is a private citizen and a lawyer, and that Joe **Biden** "does not endorse any particular company and has no involvement with this company."

Fox News' Ed Henry contributed to this report.

Biden's Son, Hunter, Discharged From Navy Over Failed Cocaine Test : The Two-Way : NPR

By Eyder Peralta

[NPR](#), October 16, 2014

Vice President Joe **Biden's** son, Hunter, has been discharged from the Navy after testing positive for cocaine, The Wall Street Journal reported on Thursday.

Citing "people familiar with the matter," the paper reports:

“Hunter **Biden**, a lawyer by training who is now a managing partner at an investment company, had been commissioned as an ensign in the Navy Reserve, a part-time position. But after failing a drug test last year, his brief military career ended.

“Mr. **Biden**, 44 years old, decided to pursue military service relatively late, beginning the direct-commission process to become a public-affairs officer in the Navy Reserve in 2012. Because of his age—43 when he was to be commissioned—he needed a waiver to join the Navy. He received a second Navy waiver because of a drug-related incident when he was a young man, according to people familiar with the matter. Military officials say such drug waivers aren’t uncommon.”

In a statement issued by Hunter **Biden** in response to the Wall Street Journal story, he says that serving in the Navy was the honor of his life.

“I deeply regret and am embarrassed that my actions led to my administrative discharge,” he said. “I respect the Navy’s decision. With the love and support of my family, I’m moving forward.”

ABC News, citing “a person familiar with the case,” reports that Hunter **Biden** was discharged from the Navy in February after failing a urinalysis test.

The network adds:

“Separately, a Navy spokesman confirmed that **Biden** had been discharged from the Navy, but because of Privacy Act restrictions could not detail why he had been discharged.

“‘Ensign Hunter **Biden** was selected for commission through the Direct Commission Officer Program in 2012,’ Cmd. Ryan Perry said. ‘In May, 2013 he was assigned to the Navy Public Supports Element East in Norfolk, Virginia. He was discharged from the Navy Reserve in February, 2014. Like other junior officers, the details of Ensign **Biden**’s discharge are not releasable under the Privacy Act.’”

Joe Biden’s Son Hunter Kicked Out Of Navy For Cocaine

By Jim Miklaszewski and Courtney Kube

[NBC News](#), October 17, 2014

Vice President Joe **Biden**’s son was booted from the Navy Reserve earlier because he tested positive for drugs, it was revealed on Thursday.

A U.S. official told NBC News that Hunter **Biden** was kicked out of the Reserve earlier this year after he failed a drug test.

The official said **Biden** failed the test in 2013, but he was not kicked out until Feb. 14 of this year. Senior U.S. officials told NBC News that **Biden**, 44, tested positive for cocaine. The Wall Street Journal first reported the incident.

According to one official, **Biden**’s dismissal from the Naval Reserves was not made public “because he was treated like any other sailor who fails a drug test and is thrown out of the Navy.” The official said the services do not routinely report such cases.

Hunter **Biden**, who is married with three kids, issued a statement Thursday evening through his lawyer, saying: “It was the honor of my life to serve in the US Navy, and I deeply regret and am embarrassed that my actions led to my administrative discharge. I respect the Navy’s decision. With the love and support of my family, I’m moving forward.”

Biden was commissioned in the Navy Reserves in 2012 as an Ensign and was pursuing a public affairs track. He had to get a waiver because of his age at the time of his commissioning.

Hunter Biden Discharged From Navy Reserve Over Cocaine

By Rachel Kleinman

[MSNBC](#), October 17, 2014

Hunter **Biden** – the 44-year-old son of Vice President Joe **Biden** – was discharged from the Navy Reserve earlier this year upon failing a drug test in 2013, a U.S. official confirmed to NBC News.

Biden was commissioned by the Navy in 2012 as an Ensign.

It was the honor of my life to serve in the U.S. Navy, and I deeply regret and am embarrassed that my actions led to my administrative discharge,” **Biden** said in a statement. “I respect the Navy’s decision. With the love and support of my family, I’m moving forward.”

Hunter **Biden** tested positive for cocaine during a drill weekend in mid-2013, a U.S. official told NBC News.

Andrea Mitchell Reports, 4/22/14, 1:18 PM ET Hunter **Biden** tries to live on \$1.50 a day

The “Live Below The Line” campaign hopes to bring attention to extreme poverty by challenging people to live a budget of \$1.50 a day for up to five days. Hunter **Biden** and Rick Leach, President and CEO of World Food program USA, discuss. Hunter **Biden** is Vice President Joe **Biden**’s second son, and stepson to Joe **Biden**’s wife Jill **Biden**. He is a licensed attorney and managing partner at Rosemont Seneca Partners, LLC.

Joe **Biden**’s oldest son Beau **Biden** is the attorney general of Delaware and currently considered a front-runner in the 2016 race for governor of the Diamond State. A recent University of Delaware poll shows 60% of respondents view Beau **Biden** favorably.

Joe Biden’s Son Hunter Biden Discharged From Navy After Positive Cocaine Test

By Luis Martinez and Arlette Saenz

[ABC Otus News](#), October 17, 2014

Vice President Joe **Biden**’s son Hunter **Biden** was discharged from the Navy in February after testing positive for cocaine, a person familiar with the case confirmed to ABC News.

The person said **Biden** had failed a urinalysis test administered in June 2013 before he was discharged from the Navy.

“It was the honor of my life to serve in the U.S. Navy, and I deeply regret and am embarrassed that my actions led to my administrative discharge,” Hunter **Biden** said in a statement distributed through his lawyer. “I respect the Navy’s decision. With the love and support of my family, I’m moving forward.”

The person familiar with the case said he “was treated no different than any other sailor.”

Biden, 44, had needed an age waiver to join the Reserves because of his age as well as a second waiver because of a drug-related incident while a young man.

Separately, a Navy spokesman confirmed that **Biden** had been discharged from the Navy, but because of Privacy Act restrictions could not detail why he had been discharged.

“Ensign Hunter **Biden** was selected for commission through the Direct Commission Officer Program in 2012,” Cmdr. Ryan Perry said. “In May, 2013 he was assigned to the Navy Public Supports Element East in Norfolk, Virginia. He was discharged from the Navy Reserve in February, 2014. Like other junior officers, the details of Ensign **Biden**’s discharge are not releasable under the Privacy Act.”

News of Hunter **Biden**’s discharge was first reported by the Wall Street Journal.

Failed Drug Test Leads To Discharge Of Biden's Son

By William H. McMichael and Jonathan Starkey

[Wilmington \(DE\) News Journal](#), October 16, 2014

Hunter **Biden**, the younger son of Vice President Joe **Biden**, failed a drug test for cocaine a month after his commissioning into the Navy Reserve and was discharged, The Wall Street Journal reported late Thursday.

"It was the honor of my life to serve in the U.S. Navy, and I deeply regret and am embarrassed that my actions led to my administrative discharge," **Biden** said in statement issued through his lawyer. "I respect the Navy's decision. With the love and support of my family, I'm moving forward."

A spokeswoman for the vice president declined to comment.

Biden, an ensign, was selected for commission as a reserve officer through the Direct Commission Officer program in 2012, according to Cmdr. Ryan Perry, a Navy spokesman.

In May 2013, **Biden**, 43 was commissioned into the Navy Reserve unit for Navy Public Affairs Support Element East in Norfolk, Virginia. **Biden**, who had no prior military experience, was one of six officers commissioned nationally into the public affairs division of the Navy Reserve.

The Wall Street Journal, citing "people familiar with the matter" reported that **Biden** was given a drug test in June 2013 that tested positive for cocaine.

The brother of Delaware Attorney General Beau **Biden**, Hunter **Biden** – who has worked as a lawyer, lobbyist and managing partner at the investment firm Rosemont Seneca Partners in Washington – was discharged from the Navy Reserve in February.

Perry would provide no other details. "Like other junior officers, the details of Ensign **Biden's** discharge are not releasable under the Privacy Act," he said.

Asked whether **Biden's** commissioning had anything to do with his father's high position in the government, Perry succinctly told The News Journal, "No, it didn't.

"All candidates were considered based on the merits of their application and Mr. **Biden** met the qualifications for commission," Perry said.

Applicants to the direct commissioning program for the Public Affairs Reserve must hold a baccalaureate degree or higher from an accredited institution, preferably in the fields of communication, English, Journalism, broadcasting, public relations, rhetoric/speech, marketing, international studies or public administration. Applicants may not have passed their 42nd birthday at time of commissioning or an age waiver is required. The board meets twice annually and, on average, approximately 35 people apply, Ryan said.

Biden sought and received a waiver to join the service because of his age.

The Wall Street Journal reported Thursday that **Biden** received a second waiver because of a "drug-related incident when he was a young man." The report added that such waivers are not uncommon.

The vice president joked in January 2013 about Hunter's decision to join the military late in life during a speech at the American Legion's Salute to Heroes Inaugural Ball, which honors Medal of Honor recipients.

"We have a lot of bad judgment in my family. "My son, who is over 40, just joined the United States Navy. He's about to be sworn in as an officer," **Biden** said.

But Hunter joining the military was a source of pride for the Bidens, and military service runs in the family.

Beau **Biden** is a major in the Delaware Army National Guard and served in Iraq from October 2008 to September 2009.

Jill **Biden** talked about Hunter joining the Navy during a November 2012 event with Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus

"I'm looking forward to standing with our son, Hunter, when he is commissioned as an ensign in the United States Navy," Jill **Biden** said at the time, according to a Navy transcript. "He follows in the footsteps of two of his grandfathers, who have also served in the Navy."

Contact Jonathan Starkey at jstarkey@delawareonline.com. Contact William H. McMichael at bmc michael@delawareonline.com.

Read or Share this story: <http://delonline.us/1wa4SID>

Cocaine Busted: Biden's Son Booted From The Navy After One Reserve-duty Weekend

By Timothy Whiteman

[Examiner](#), October 17, 2014

After a singular weekend Reservist drill with the U.S. Navy, Vice President Joe **Biden's** youngest son has been kicked out of the Armed Forces for cocaine use. As reported by the Wall Street Journal on Oct. 16, 2014, the now ex-Ensign Hunter **Biden** sunk his naval career literally on his first day of duty.

Deemed an Officer and a Gentleman by an act of Congress, **Biden** was commissioned an Ensign on May 7, 2013 in the Navy Reserve. Assigned to the Navy Public Affairs Support Element East reserve command, then Ensign **Biden** reported for duty to his unit one short month later for his first ever weekend reserve drill at the sprawling Naval Station in Norfolk, Virginia. Upon arrival, he was promptly given a drug test, which just as promptly, came back with a positive result for cocaine use. After months of working its way through the bureaucracy, **Biden** was finally released from the Navy last February, sans Honorable Discharge.

The youngest of the **Biden** sons waited somewhat late in life to pursue a military career at the age of 43, albeit that of the Naval Reserve component vice active duty. Seeking one of the very rare Direct Commission Officer (DCO) slots available every year, the former Ensign **Biden** managed to secure one of the six seats open for Public Affairs Officers.

With the official cut off that of no older than 35, **Biden** somehow managed to be granted an age waiver by the Navy Department. Yet the over-age waiver was only the first. Reportedly, he also managed to secure a second waiver for a prior drug-related incident in his past.

DCOs aren't required to attend any of the Service Academies nor any of the standard and usually rigorous Officer Commissioning Programs offered at most major universities and colleges. **Biden's** formal training prior to his commissioning was what the Old Salts in the Navy refer to as The Knife and Fork School. The two week long seminar located at the Naval Station, Newport, Rhode Island consists of "academic instruction, military training, and physical conditioning. 90+ hours of lessons include: Leadership and Management, Programs and Policies, Military Customs, Traditions, and regulations, naval history, Naval Warfare, and Fitness and Wellness Programs" as cited in the Navy's official website

While there's been no official comment from the Office of the Vice President, former Ensign **Biden** is somehow managing to move in with his life. While it hasn't been released if he's received a General Discharge or an Other than Honorable, the ex-Ensign said in a statement that it was "the honor of my life to serve in the U.S. Navy, and I deeply regret and am embarrassed that my actions led to my administrative discharge. I respect the Navy's decision. With the love and support of my family, I'm moving forward."

While his being bounced from the Navy may be a professional embarrassment, it certainly won't effect him financially. **Biden** is currently a partner at Rosemont Seneca Partners, LLC and is Counsel to

the a New York based-law firm of Boies, Schiller, Flexner, LLP. Additionally, he was the center of controversy when he was appointed to the board of the Ukrainian Energy Company Burisma Holdings, which is part of the vast business empire of Ihor Kolomoisky, who himself has been looked upon for rather shady financial dealings in Eastern Europe.

Vice President Biden's Youngest Son Discharged From Navy Reserves After Testing Positive For Cocaine: Report

By DAN FRIEDMAN

[New York Daily News](#), October 17, 2014

WASHINGTON — Vice President **Biden**'s youngest son was discharged from the Navy Reserves this year after testing positive for cocaine, according to a report Thursday.

Hunter **Biden**, 44, a lawyer who works for an investment company, failed the drug test after he reported to a Norfolk, Va., reserve unit last year, the Wall Street Journal reported.

It was "the honor of my life to serve in the U.S. Navy, and I deeply regret and am embarrassed that my actions led to my administrative discharge," Hunter **Biden** said in a statement.

"I respect the Navy's decision. With the love and support of my family, I'm moving forward."

Biden joined the reserve officer program in 2012. He was commissioned as an ensign in 2013 and assigned to a public affairs unit in Norfolk.

After reporting to the unit in June 2013, **Biden** was given a urinalysis drug test, and he failed it. He was discharged in February 2014.

The vice president's son "was treated no different than any other sailor," a person familiar with the matter told ABC News.

The Navy confirmed **Biden** was discharged but declined to comment on the reason for the discharge because of Privacy Act restrictions.

Navy personnel who are discharged because of a failed drug test are not given honorable discharges. Most receive an "other than honorable" or "general" discharge.

It isn't clear which discharge **Biden** received, the Journal reported.

In joining the Navy Reserves, **Biden** needed one waiver because of his age and a second waiver because of a drug-related incident when he was younger.

A spokeswoman for Vice President **Biden**, who is widely believed to be considering a 2016 presidential bid, declined to comment.

The veep has publicly cited Hunter **Biden**'s Navy position, telling an American Legion gathering in 2013, "My son, who is over 40, just joined the United States Navy. He's about to be sworn in as an officer, Hunter **Biden**."

Hunter **Biden**, who is married with three children, graduated from Georgetown University and Yale Law School, and serves as managing partner at Rosemont Seneca Partners in Washington, D.C. In May, he joined the board of Ukraine's largest private gas firm.

The vice president's older son, Delaware Attorney General Beau **Biden**, is expected to run for governor.

Joe **Biden** and his wife Jill have a daughter, Ashley, who joined the Delaware Center for Justice in 2012 as associate executive director.

A member of the extended **Biden** clan, the vice president's niece Caroline **Biden**, was nabbed last year in Manhattan for assaulting a cop and refusing arrest after a dispute with a roommate over rent.

Because the officer was not hurt, prosecutors earlier this year agreed to dismiss the charges and seal her record if she stayed out of trouble for six months.

Hunter Biden Kicked Out Of The Navy For Failing Cocaine Test

[New York Post](#), October 17, 2014

WASHINGTON—Vice President Joe **Biden**'s son Hunter was discharged from the Navy Reserve this year after testing positive for cocaine, according to people familiar with the matter.

Hunter **Biden**, a lawyer by training who is now a managing partner at an investment company, had been commissioned as an ensign in the Navy Reserve, a part-time position. But after failing a drug test last year, his brief military career ended.

Biden, 44 years old, decided to pursue military service relatively late, beginning the direct-commission process to become a public-affairs officer in the Navy Reserve in 2012. Because of his age—43 when he was to be commissioned—he needed a waiver to join the Navy. He received a second Navy waiver because of a drug-related incident when he was a young man, according to people familiar with the matter. Military officials say such drug waivers aren't uncommon.

Biden was commissioned as an ensign on May 7, 2013, and assigned to Navy Public Affairs Support Element East in Norfolk, Va., a reserve unit, according to the Navy. In June 2013, after reporting to his unit in Norfolk, he was given a drug test, which turned up positive for cocaine, according to people familiar with the situation. **Biden** was discharged in February, the Navy said.

Biden said in a statement that it was "the honor of my life to serve in the U.S. Navy, and I deeply regret and am embarrassed that my actions led to my administrative discharge. I respect the Navy's decision. With the love and support of my family, I'm moving forward."

This article originally appeared on Marketwatch.

VP Biden's Son Kicked Out Of Navy Reserve

By O'Ryan Johnson

[Boston Herald](#), October 17, 2014

The youngest son of Vice President Joe **Biden** was kicked out of the Navy Reserve after testing positive for cocaine, two people familiar with the matter said yesterday.

Hunter **Biden**, 44, was discharged from the Navy Reserve in February, the Navy said in a statement. The Navy did not give a reason for the discharge.

Biden's attorney didn't respond to inquiries about whether **Biden** had used cocaine. But two people familiar with the matter said **Biden** was discharged after he failed a drug test last year. They weren't authorized to discuss the incident and requested anonymity.

Hunter **Biden** released a statement saying he was honored "to serve in the Navy and he was "embarrassed" by his actions.

"It was the honor of my life to serve in the U.S. Navy, and I deeply regret and am embarrassed that my actions led to my administrative discharge," Hunter **Biden** said in a statement. "I respect the Navy's decision. With the love and support of my family, I'm moving forward."

The vice president's office declined to comment.

Biden, a former lobbyist who works at an investment firm, was discharged barely a year after he was selected for the part-time position as a public affairs officer in the Navy Reserve.

His brother, Beau, is the attorney general of Delaware and is a major in the state's Army National Guard.

Hunter Biden Discharged From Navy

By Paul Szoldra

[Business Insider](#), October 17, 2014

Vice President Joe **Biden's** son Hunter was kicked out of the Navy Reserve this year after he tested positive for cocaine, The Wall Street Journal reported Thursday.

A Yale-educated lawyer, the 44-year-old Hunter **Biden** was commissioned as a Navy ensign May 7, 2013 and assigned as a public affairs officer at a reserve unit in Norfolk, Va., the Journal reported. But just a month later when he checked into his new unit and was given a drug test, he popped for cocaine.

He was discharged in February of this year.

In a statement, **Biden** said it was "the honor of my life to serve in the U.S. Navy, and I deeply regret and am embarrassed that my actions led to my administrative discharge. I respect the Navy's decision. With the love and support of my family, I'm moving forward."

It was not clear what type of discharge he received. Military personnel discharged for drug usage usually do not receive honorable discharges, although **Biden's** statement says he received an "administrative discharge."

The Navy did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

CNN has more:

The U.S. official said the Navy never had contact with the vice president's office over the issue, and that standard procedure for failed drug tests is administrative discharge. The vice president's office didn't comment on the report.

In a speech given at the commissioning of the USS Delaware in 2012, Navy Secretary Ray Mabus noted that Hunter would be joining the service. His brother Beau also served in the military, as an attorney in the Army with a deployment to Iraq.

Biden's job in the Navy Reserve was only a part-time commitment. He has kept busy as head of the legal unit for Ukraine's largest private gas firm, according to The Washington Post. He also serves as managing partner at Rosemont Seneca Partners and is an adjunct professor at Georgetown University.

Top News, Latest Headlines, Latest News, World News & U.S News

[UPI](#), October 16, 2014

WASHINGTON, Oct. 16 (UPI) –

Hunter **Biden** was discharged from the Navy this year for cocaine.

The 44-year-old son of Vice President Joe **Biden** was kicked out of the Navy Reserve after failing a drug test for cocaine, sources confirmed to The Wall Street Journal

Thursday. **Biden** commissioned as an ensign in May 2013, tested positive for cocaine in June 2013 and was subsequently discharged in February.

"It was the honor of my life to serve in the U.S. Navy, and I deeply regret and am embarrassed that my actions led to my administrative discharge," **Biden** said in a statement. "I respect the Navy's decision. With the love and support of my family, I'm moving forward."

Biden attended Yale Law School, and was a founding partner of Washington D.C.-based law firm Oldaker, **Biden**, and Belair, LLP. He is currently serves as chairman of World Food Program USA, and was appointed

to the board of directors at Bursima Holdings in May.

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NEW YORK TIMES AND WASHINGTON POST OP-EDS

Keeping Ebola At Bay

[New York Times](#), October 17, 2014

The Ebola cases in the United States show that American hospitals and public health officials have much to learn about effective ways to protect health care workers and the public from possible infection.

Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital, the first hospital put to the test, failed to protect two nurses, who had cared for the Ebola victim Thomas Eric Duncan, from becoming infected. Perhaps more alarming are the stumbles by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the lead federal agency for fighting infectious diseases.

One of the nurses, who was monitoring her own temperature, called the C.D.C. and was allowed to take a commercial flight from Cleveland to Dallas-Fort Worth even though she had a slight fever, which did not violate current guidelines. That was an incredible lapse in judgment by the C.D.C.

Health officials and the flight's airline are now scrambling to notify passengers, crew members and janitors who cleaned the planes she traveled on of possible exposure. While the danger to those people appears slight, this incident shows that the C.D.C. needs to lower the fever threshold in its guidance and advise against any travel on public forms of transportation for 21 days by people who have potentially been exposed to the virus.

There is more the agency ought to do. It should be increasing the rigor of its guidelines on protective clothing for health care workers, hospital readiness, and training on the handling of Ebola cases. President Obama said on Thursday evening that he is considering appointing an "Ebola czar" to manage the government's response.

The C.D.C.'s inadequate advice to hospitals on how to protect health care workers may have contributed to the latest cases. An expert who oversaw the treatment of two American missionaries flown from West Africa to Atlanta for treatment at Emory University Hospital told The Times that he had warned the C.D.C. repeatedly that its guidelines were irresponsibly lax. The guidelines allowed protective garments that left the neck and other areas exposed. It was not until Tuesday night that the agency — essentially acknowledging its error — issued new, stricter guidelines requiring full-body suits covering the head and neck, as well as close supervision of the risky process of taking off protective gear.

Unless the C.D.C. can help hospitals prepare properly, every new case will result in improvised responses that may not work. The hospital in Dallas has sent one of the nurses to Emory and the other to the National Institutes of Health, two of the nation's four specially designated high-containment hospitals. But there are only a limited number of beds in these institutions (N.I.H. has only two such beds), so other major medical centers must be ready to accept cases if necessary. Some hospitals in cities with large West African populations are taking steps to train their staffs.

While the chance that an infected patient will show up at any particular hospital or clinic is very small, health workers should still know the basics of what to do if a patient arrives at their door. National Nurses United, the country's largest union of nurses, says there has been almost no hands-on training, just easy-to-ignore guidance documents.

The advice now from the C.D.C. is for emergency room staff to take travel histories, isolate patients who have fevers and have been in West Africa, and call the C.D.C. if Ebola is suspected. Once a case is diagnosed as Ebola, the C.D.C. will fly in a swat team of experts within hours to oversee treatment.

At a congressional hearing on Thursday, House members asked whether the United States was adequately protected against people who might have been infected in West Africa but did not yet have

symptoms. The current system relies on screening before they are allowed to fly out of West Africa and again when they reach airports in this country. So far, only one infected patient — the man who was treated in Dallas and later died — escaped detection at the airports since the epidemic was first identified seven months ago. There should be some comfort in knowing that that part of the system is working.

Even so, some members of Congress, mostly Republicans, have called for barring entry to all people who have been in the Ebola-stricken countries as a way to keep the virus out.

The danger is that if other nations followed an American ban with bans of their own, economies in West Africa would be crippled. That could only reduce the ability of those nations to fight the epidemic, and make it even more likely the disease would spread through porous borders to other African nations and beyond.

Evo Morales Of Bolivia And Democracy

[New York Times](#), October 17, 2014

Evo Morales, Bolivia's populist president, dedicated his landslide re-election victory on Sunday night to the late Venezuelan leader, Hugo Chávez. Mr. Chávez's brand of socialist policies and anti-American bombast have found strong resonance in much of the continent, most significantly in Ecuador and Bolivia.

Most Latin American nations hold regular, credible elections, although the strength of democratic values in the region has been undermined in past years by coups and electoral irregularities. But perhaps the most disquieting trend is that protégés of Mr. Chávez seem inclined to emulate his reluctance to cede power.

If Mr. Morales, who was first elected in 2006, serves out his term and leaves office in 2020, he will be the country's longest-serving president. With strong popular support and allies in Congress, he could well try to stay in power even longer by amending the constitution or calling for a referendum. (He recently said in an interview that he was not inclined to stay beyond 2020, but his remarks were far from categorical.)

In Ecuador, President Rafael Correa is seeking legislative action that would allow all elected officials to run for an indefinite number of terms. Diplomats and analysts say some Central American leaders are likely to follow suit.

Colombia managed to resist this trend near the end of former President Álvaro Uribe's second term in office in 2010. Having amended the Constitution once in 2006 to secure a second term, Mr. Uribe's supporters in Congress tried to keep him in office for a third. They were stopped by a sound ruling of the country's Constitutional Court.

It is easy to see why many Bolivians would want to see Mr. Morales, the country's first president with indigenous roots, remain at the helm. During his tenure, the economy of the country, one of the least developed in the hemisphere, grew at a healthy rate, the level of inequality shrank and the number of people living in poverty dropped significantly. He has also given the Andean nation, with its history of political turmoil, a long stretch of relative stability.

But the pattern of prolonged terms in power is unhealthy for the region. It is disquieting that the stronger democracies in Latin America seem happy to condone it. To varying degrees, Latin America's entrenched rulers have weakened institutions and asserted greater control over the press. Staying in office for several terms enables leaders to appoint allies to electoral and judicial bodies and to build patronage networks that turn out the vote.

The starkest, and most alarming, example, is President Nicolás Maduro of Venezuela, Mr. Chávez's handpicked successor, who has turned his country into an autocratic, despotic state.

This regional dynamic has been dismal for Washington's influence in the region. In Venezuela, Bolivia and Ecuador, the new generation of caudillos have staked out anti-American policies and limited the scope of engagement on development, military cooperation and drug enforcement efforts. This has damaged the prospects for trade and security cooperation.

Mr. Morales could keep Bolivia on a positive trajectory by continuing to invest in social welfare programs and infrastructure. His legacy would be stronger if he, or lawmakers, decided that this new term would be his last.

Why North Carolina's Senate Race Has A Wide Gender Gap

By David Firestone

[New York Times](#), October 17, 2014

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — There are two Southern women running for re-election to the Senate this year, both of them Democrats, and the difference in their approach to social issues says everything about the temper of their states.

In Louisiana, a deeply conservative state with a large Catholic population, Mary Landrieu has taken what she calls “nuanced” positions on abortion and same-sex marriage, essentially trying to have it both ways. She says life begins at conception, but the government should stay out of the bedroom and doctor's office, except if it wants to ban late-term abortions.

She says she supports same-sex marriage, but also supports the Louisiana constitutional amendment banning it. It's no wonder she would rather spend her time extolling fossil fuels.

But on Wednesday in Charlotte, Kay Hagan stood without hesitation next to Janet Colm, chief executive of the Planned Parenthood Action Fund of Central North Carolina, and proudly bashed her opponent, Thom Tillis, for reducing women's rights on abortion and birth control.

“It is 2014, and these decisions should be between a woman and her doctor, not between a woman and her boss, nor her senator,” she said at a news conference here, surrounded by cheering female supporters. “And let me tell you, after seeing what Thom Tillis has done in Raleigh, I am so glad that no legislator in Raleigh is my doctor.”

Ms. Hagan needs women to show up at the polls on Nov. 4, maybe more so than candidates in other races. She has been running even or a few points ahead of Mr. Tillis in a swing state that is better educated and more urbanized than Louisiana, and some polls have given her an advantage of as much as 20 percent over Mr. Tillis among women, the biggest gender gap in any Senate race.

Under the circumstances, she couldn't ask for a more perfect opponent, because Mr. Tillis — the speaker of the state House — has a long record of making life harder for women in North Carolina, particularly poor ones. He led Republicans in defunding Planned Parenthood, which provides preventive health services and birth control.

He added a series of abortion-clinic restrictions to a motorcycle-safety bill and pushed it into law. And he refused to expand Medicaid in the state, denying health insurance to 500,000 people, including 277,000 women.

He has said states have the right to ban contraceptives, supports a personhood amendment that would effectively ban abortion (though he favors an exception for rape, incest and health dangers), and has fought same-sex marriage in the state. He killed a bill mandating equal pay for women, saying existing laws were adequate. “Let's enforce the laws on the books,” he said at a recent debate, “versus some of the campaign gimmicks that are going to put more regulations on businesses and make it more difficult.”

More broadly, Mr. Tillis embodies the backward turn that North Carolina took when Republicans assumed control of state government last year and proceeded to dismantle years of progress on education, racial equality and ballot access.

The state's decline has dismayed even moderate voters, and is a big reason Ms. Hagan has not fallen behind in the race, despite President Obama's unpopularity in the state.

To stay ahead, she will need every woman's vote she can find. And even though she didn't say so on Wednesday, there's a lot at stake for men, too.

The Dark Market For Personal Data

By Frank Pasquale

[New York Times](#), October 17, 2014

BALTIMORE — THE reputation business is exploding. Having eroded privacy for decades, shady, poorly regulated data miners, brokers and resellers have now taken creepy classification to a whole new level. They have created lists of victims of sexual assault, and lists of people with sexually transmitted diseases. Lists of people who have Alzheimer's, dementia and AIDS. Lists of the impotent and the depressed.

There are lists of "impulse buyers." Lists of suckers: gullible consumers who have shown that they are susceptible to "vulnerability-based marketing." And lists of those deemed commercially undesirable because they live in or near trailer parks or nursing homes. Not to mention lists of people who have been accused of wrongdoing, even if they were not charged or convicted.

Typically sold at a few cents per name, the lists don't have to be particularly reliable to attract eager buyers — mostly marketers, but also, increasingly, financial institutions vetting customers to guard against fraud, and employers screening potential hires.

There are three problems with these lists. First, they are often inaccurate. For example, as The Washington Post reported, an Arkansas woman found her credit history and job prospects wrecked after she was mistakenly listed as a methamphetamine dealer. It took her years to clear her name and find a job.

Second, even when the information is accurate, many of the lists have no business being in the hands of retailers, bosses or banks. Having a medical condition, or having been a victim of a crime, is simply not relevant to most employment or credit decisions.

Third, people aren't told they are on these lists, so they have no opportunity to correct bad information. The Arkansas woman found out about the inaccurate report only when she was denied a job. She was one of the rare ones.

"Data-driven" hiring practices are under increasing scrutiny, because the data may be a proxy for race, class or disability. For example, in 2011, CVS settled a charge of disability discrimination after a job applicant challenged a personality test that probed mental health issues. But if an employer were to secretly use lists based on inferences about mental health, it would be nearly impossible for an affected applicant to find out what was going on. Secrecy is discrimination's best friend: Unknown unfairness can never be detected, let alone corrected.

These problems can't be solved with existing law. The Federal Trade Commission has strained to understand personal data markets — a \$156-billion-a-year industry — and it can't find out where the data brokers get their information, and whom they sell it to. Hiding behind a veil of trade secrecy, most refuse to divulge this vital information.

The market in personal information offers little incentive for accuracy; it matters little to list-buyers whether every entry is accurate — they need only a certain threshold percentage of “hits” to improve their targeting. But to individuals wrongly included on derogatory lists, the harm to their reputation is great.

The World Privacy Forum, a research and advocacy organization, estimates that there are about 4,000 data brokers. They range from giants like Acxiom, a publicly traded company that helps marketers target consumer segments, to boutiques like Paramount Lists, which has compiled lists of addicts and debtors. Companies like these vacuum up data from just about any source imaginable: consumer health websites, payday lenders, online surveys, warranty registrations, Internet sweepstakes, loyalty-card data from retailers, charities’ donor lists, magazine subscription lists, and information from public records.

It’s unrealistic to expect individuals to inquire, broker by broker, about their files. Instead, we need to require brokers to make targeted disclosures to consumers. Uncovering problems in Big Data (or decision models based on that data) should not be a burden we expect individuals to solve on their own.

Privacy protections in other areas of the law can and should be extended to cover consumer data. The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act, or Hipaa, obliges doctors and hospitals to give patients access to their records. The Fair Credit Reporting Act gives loan and job applicants, among others, a right to access, correct and annotate files maintained by credit reporting agencies.

It is time to modernize these laws by applying them to all companies that peddle sensitive personal information. If the laws cover only a narrow range of entities, they may as well be dead letters. For example, protections in Hipaa don’t govern the “health profiles” that are compiled and traded by data brokers, which can learn a great deal about our health even without access to medical records.

Congress should require data brokers to register with the Federal Trade Commission, and allow individuals to request immediate notification once they have been placed on lists that contain sensitive data. Reputable data brokers will want to respond to good-faith complaints, to make their lists more accurate. Plaintiffs’ lawyers could use defamation law to hold recalcitrant firms accountable.

We need regulation to help consumers recognize the perils of the new information landscape without being overwhelmed with data. The right to be notified about the use of one’s data and the right to challenge and correct errors is fundamental. Without these protections, we’ll continue to be judged by a big-data Star Chamber of unaccountable decision makers using questionable sources.

Frank Pasquale, a professor of law at the University of Maryland, is the author of the forthcoming book “The Black Box Society: The Secret Algorithms That Control Money and Information.”

The Case For Low Ideals

By David Brooks

[New York Times](#), October 17, 2014

Let’s say you came of political age during Barack Obama’s 2008 campaign. Maybe you were swept up in the idealism. But now you’ve seen an election driven by hope give way to an election driven by fear. Partisans are afraid the other side might win. Candidates are pawns of the consultants because they’re afraid of themselves. Everybody’s afraid of the Ebola virus, ISIS and the fragile economy.

The politics of the last few years have made you disappointed, disillusioned and cynical. You look back at your earlier idealism as cotton candy.

Well, I’m here to make the case for political idealism.

I’m not making the case for the high idealism that surrounded that 2008 campaign. It was based on the idea that people are basically innocent and differences can be quickly transcended. It was based on

the idea that society is easily malleable and it's possible to have quick transformational change. It was based in the idea of a heroic savior (remember those "Hope" posters).

I'm here to make the case for low idealism. The low idealist rejects the politics of innocence. The low idealist recoils from any movement that promises "new beginnings," tries to offer transcendent "bliss to be alive" moments or tries to fill people's spiritual voids.

Low idealism begins with a sturdy and accurate view of human nature. We're all a bit self-centered, self-interested and inclined to think we are nobler than we are. Montaigne wrote, "If others examined themselves attentively, as I do, they would find themselves, as I do, full of inanity and nonsense. Get rid of it I cannot without getting rid of myself."

Low idealism continues with a realistic view of politics. Politics is slow drilling through hard boards. It is a series of messy compromises. The core functions of government are negative — putting out fires, arresting criminals, settling disputes — and much of what government does is the unromantic work of preventing bad situations from getting worse.

Politicians operate in a recalcitrant medium with incomplete information, bad options and no sleep. Government in good times is merely dull; when it is enthralling, times are usually bad.

So low idealism starts with a tone of sympathy. Anybody who works in this realm deserves compassion and gentle regard. The low idealist knows that rallies with anthems and roaring are just make-believe, but has warm affection for any politician who exhibits neighborliness, courtesy and the ability to listen. The low idealist understands that those who try to rise above the messy business of deal-making often turn into zealots and wind up sinking below it. On the other hand, this kind of idealist has a full heart for those who serve the practical work of legislating: James Baker and Ted Kennedy in the old days; Bob Corker and Ron Wyden today. Believing experience is the best mode of education, he favors the competent old hand to the naïve outsider.

The low idealist is more romantic about the past than about the future. Though governing is hard, there are some miracles of human creation that have been handed down to us. These include, first and foremost, the American Constitution, but also the institutions that function pretty well, like the Congressional Budget Office and the Federal Reserve. Her first job is to work with existing materials, magnify what's best and incrementally reform what is worst.

The businessman might be enamored of disruptive change, but the low idealist abhors it in politics. The low idealist liked Obama's vow to hit foreign policy singles and doubles day by day, so long as there is a large vision to give long-term direction.

The low idealist admires a different kind of leader; not the martyr or the passionate crusader or the righteous populist. He likes the resilient one, who maybe has been tainted by scandals and has learned from his self-inflicted wounds that his own worst enemy is himself.

He likes the person who speaks only after paying minute attention to the way things really are, and whose proposals are grounded in the low stability of the truth.

The low idealist lives most of her life at a deeper dimension than the realm of the political. She believes, as Samuel Johnson put it, that "The happiness of society depends on virtue" — not primarily material conditions. But, and this is what makes her an idealist, she believes that better laws can nurture virtue. Statecraft is soulcraft. Good tax policies can arouse energy and enterprise. Good social programs can encourage compassion and community service.

Low idealism starts with a warts-and-all mentality, but holds that people can be improved by their political relationships, so it ends up with something loftier and more inspiring than those faux idealists who think human beings are not a problem and politics is a mostly a matter of moving money around.

What Markets Will

By Paul Krugman

[New York Times](#), October 17, 2014

In the Middle Ages, the call for a crusade to conquer the Holy Land was met with cries of “Deus vult!” — God wills it. But did the crusaders really know what God wanted? Given how the venture turned out, apparently not.

Now, that was a long time ago, and, in the areas I write about, invocations of God’s presumed will are rare. You do, however, see a lot of policy crusades, and these are often justified with implicit cries of “Mercatus vult!” — the market wills it. But do those invoking the will of the market really know what markets want? Again, apparently not.

And the financial turmoil of the past few days has widened the gap between what we’re told must be done to appease the market and what markets actually seem to be asking for.

To get more specific: We have been told repeatedly that governments must cease and desist from their efforts to mitigate economic pain, lest their excessive compassion be punished by the financial gods, but the markets themselves have never seemed to agree that these human sacrifices are actually necessary. Investors were supposed to be terrified by budget deficits, fearing that we were about to turn into Greece — Greece I tell you — but year after year, interest rates stayed low. The Fed’s efforts to boost the economy were supposed to backfire as markets reacted to the prospect of runaway inflation, but market measures of expected inflation similarly stayed low.

How have policy crusaders responded to the failure of their dire predictions? Mainly with denial, occasionally with exasperation. For example, Alan Greenspan once declared the failure of interest rates and inflation to spike “regrettable, because it is fostering a false sense of complacency.” But that was more than four years ago; maybe the sense of complacency wasn’t all that false?

All in all, it’s hard to escape the conclusion that people like Mr. Greenspan knew as much about what the market wanted as medieval crusaders knew about God’s plan — that is, nothing.

In fact, if you look closely, the real message from the market seems to be that we should be running bigger deficits and printing more money. And that message has gotten a lot stronger in the past few days.

I’m not mainly talking about plunging stock prices, although that’s surely telling us something (but as the late Paul Samuelson famously pointed out, stocks are not a reliable indicator of economic prospects: “Wall Street indexes predicted nine out of the last five recessions!”) Instead, I’m talking about interest rates, which are flashing warnings, not of fiscal crisis and inflation, but of depression and deflation.

Most obviously, interest rates on long-term U.S. government debt — the rates that the usual suspects keep telling us will shoot up any day now unless we slash spending — have fallen sharply. This tells us that markets aren’t worried about default, but that they are worried about persistent economic weakness, which will keep the Fed from raising the short-term interest rates it controls.

Interest rates on much European debt are even lower, because Europe’s economic outlook is so bad, and we’re not just talking about Germany. France is currently in conflict with the European Commission, which says that the projected French deficit is too big, but investors — who are still buying French bonds despite a 10-year interest rate of only 1.26 percent — are evidently much more worried about European stagnation than French default.

It’s also instructive to look at interest rates on “inflation-protected” or “index” bonds, which are telling us two things. First, markets are practically begging governments to borrow and spend, say on infrastructure; interest rates on index bonds are barely above zero, so that financing for roads, bridges, and sewers would be almost free. Second, the difference between interest rates on index and ordinary

bonds tells us how much inflation the market expects, and it turns out that expected inflation has fallen sharply over the past few months, so that it's now far below the Fed's target. In effect, the market is saying that the Fed isn't printing nearly enough money.

One question you might ask is why the market's pro-spending, print-more-money message has suddenly gotten louder. My guess is that it's mainly driven by events in Europe, where the slide into deflation and the growing public backlash against austerity have reached a tipping point. And it's very reasonable to worry that Europe's problems may spill over to the rest of us.

In any case, the next time you hear some talking head opining on what we must do to satisfy the markets, ask yourself, "How does he know?" For the truth is that when people talk about what markets demand, what they're really doing is trying to bully us into doing what they themselves want.

Don't Depend On Those Frozen Eggs

By Sarah Elizabeth Richards

[New York Times](#), October 17, 2014

IF you're a woman worried about how to balance work and family, it's a good time to job-hunt in Silicon Valley. This week it was revealed that Facebook and Apple will include egg freezing in their benefits packages. After receiving your job offer, you can order your hormone shots and be on your way to stashing away some good eggs so you can ascend to Sheryl Sandberg-esque greatness and still have a chance of having a biological family in your 40s and beyond.

Reactions to the news have varied from accolades for making the expensive procedure available, to the cynical accusation that corporate America is avoiding creating family-friendly work environments under the guise of reproductive empowerment. Yet amid all the debate over egg freezing's role in women's careers, there has been less talk about the still serious limitations of the medical procedure.

The first generation of women who froze their eggs were hit over the head with warnings not to wait too long to start their families and to think of their frozen fertility as a backup. Such cautions are drowned out by the current enthusiasm — epitomized by information sessions rebranded as "egg freezing parties" and held at swanky hotels. We are forgetting an essential fact: Egg freezing isn't going to work for all women. Success varies according to the expertise of doctors and the quality of eggs, but even the best fertility centers report that a woman's chance of pregnancy per embryo transferred to the uterus is between 30 and 50 percent. The overall chance of success rises if a woman freezes enough eggs for numerous attempts.

It makes sense for a newly divorced 39-year-old to take that risk. But what about the 32-year-old who's encouraged to freeze by her new job perk? Will she make different decisions about work and motherhood that she might later regret?

Since the procedure became available in the United States about a decade ago, fertility doctors have worried that women would put their faith in an unproven technology, postpone having babies until their natural fertility was gone and end up devastated if the eggs didn't work. The American Society for Reproductive Medicine removed the experimental label from the procedure in 2012, but still doesn't recommend it to healthy women who simply want to delay childbearing.

Stereotypes abounded of women buying time to enjoy an extended adolescence of vacations and cocktails or to single-mindedly climb the corporate ladder. But that's not why most women froze. In a survey of 183 "first-wave" freezers who underwent the procedure between 2005 and 2011 at New York University Fertility Center, 88 percent said they were postponing having children because they didn't have

a partner, and nearly 60 percent viewed egg freezing as a backup in case they could not get pregnant naturally. Only a small minority saw it strictly as an opportunity to put off having kids until later.

This seems to be changing. Today, a younger set of potential egg freezers are more likely to see the procedure as a ticket to freedom. In a recent online poll of more than 560 women — most of them under 34 — conducted by Cosmopolitan magazine, over half said that, in addition to taking off the pressure to find a partner, they'd consider freezing in order to have as much fun as possible before having kids and so a baby wouldn't derail their career in their 20s and 30s. As a Bloomberg Businessweek cover put it this spring, "Freeze Your Eggs, Free Your Career." (That assumes women don't land that family-unfriendly dream job after the eggs thaw.)

There are no official statistics on how many women have undergone the procedure, but two of the country's oldest and largest programs — Reproductive Medicine Associates of New York in Manhattan and New York University Langone Medical Center — report that their cases have more than doubled in the last two years and that the age of the average freezer has dropped to about 36 from 39 nearly a decade ago. Other doctors say they've seen a stream of even younger patients, some in their 20s.

This is a positive development, since doctors have long urged women to freeze by their mid-30s, rather than wait until their egg quality is deteriorating. More women will have the option, as other companies surely follow Facebook and Apple's example, and as prices continue to drop. The cost of stimulating one's ovaries and surgically extracting anywhere from six to 10 eggs is typically around \$10,000. Many clinics offer lower fees or multi-cycle discounts, and one of the biggest centers charges \$12,500 for up to four cycles or 20 eggs, whichever comes first. But even with that many eggs, there's no guarantee.

Women who are anxious to preserve their fertility during their prime baby-making years should take advantage of every opportunity to freeze. But despite egg freezing's new cool factor, they should never forget its power to disappoint.

Sarah Elizabeth Richards is the author of "Motherhood, Rescheduled: The New Frontier of Egg Freezing and the Women Who Tried It."

Asia's American Angst

By Roger Cohen

[New York Times](#), October 17, 2014

SINGAPORE — Outside China, there is a consistent theme in Asia. It is concern that declining American power, credibility and commitment will leave the way open for Beijing to exercise dominance over the region. President Obama's "pivot to Asia" has been dismissed as hot air. American objectives announced without consequence betray a weak presidency; Asians have drawn their conclusions.

A new Chinese assertiveness in the South China Sea and elsewhere is palpable. By contrast, the United States seems less focused on the region since former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton left office. That, at least, is the perception here in Singapore, one of the world's global cities and a small island-state whose extraordinary economic success is dependent on stability in Asia. That is inconceivable without America as counterbalance to China. But the feeling here, if anything, is that the Obama administration has pivoted away.

Singapore, like much of Asia, is intrigued by the new all-change leadership of Narendra Modi in India. It is doubly intrigued because it sees in Modi the Lee Kuan Yew of India, a man with a near Singaporean commitment to modernity, efficiency and open trade. It is triply intrigued because it seeks a balance of power in Asia and the only possible long-term regional counterbalance to China is India.

That scenario is, however, a distant one. In all aspects but its freedom, a not inconsequential matter, India lags China by a great distance. As Asia waits for the fruits of the magical Modi makeover, the presence of the United States as a Pacific power retains all its importance. India is inwardly focused. Its global reach is the last concern of the average Indian. A perception of American retreat from its ordering global role has led the smaller nations of Asia to feel more vulnerable to China's systematic push outward in search of resources and control.

Singapore's success has depended on its ability to leapfrog geography, but it could only do that because the geography was not hostile. It could depend on the fact that the foreign territorial waters at its door remained open. Japan has been restrained from going nuclear by the assurance of America's treaty commitment to its defense. From north to south Asia, such assumptions appear a little shakier.

Razeen Sally, a visiting associate professor at the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, wrote this year in Singapore's Straits Times that: "A global city is where truly global services cluster. Business — in finance, the professions, transport and communications — is done in several languages and currencies, and across several time zones and jurisdictions. Such creations face a unique set of challenges in the early 21st century. Today, there appear to be only five global cities. London and New York are at the top, followed by Hong Kong and Singapore, Asia's two service hubs. Dubai, the Middle East hub, is the newest and smallest kid on the block. Shanghai has global-city aspirations, but it is held back by China's economic restrictions — the vestiges of an ex-command economy — and its Leninist political system. Tokyo remains too Japan-centric, a far cry from a global city."

No global city can prosper in an environment where stability appears less certain and freedom in danger of curtailment. That is one reason why America's commitment to Asia matters as China rises — and doubts about America stir unease.

It is not just that the Obama administration's commitment to concluding the Trans-Pacific Partnership, an ambitious free-trade agreement that would include Singapore, Vietnam and Japan among others, has appeared underwhelming. It is not merely that the United States, by some distance, is no longer the main trading partner of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, known as Asean. It is not simply that Chinese maritime bullying in an attempt to assert its right to natural resources in the South China Sea has proceeded unabated.

It is not just that Obama, during his last visit to Asia, gave a very evasive answer to a question about whether by saying the United States would protect the Japanese-administered Senkaku Islands (claimed by China) he risked drawing another "red line." The president said he thought the implication of the question was "that each and every time a country violates one of those norms the United States should go to war, or stand prepared to engage militarily, and if it doesn't then somehow we're not serious about those norms. Well, that's not the case." Try cashing that one at the bank.

It is all of these things, plus an uneasy general feeling. The "pivot to Asia," like the Syrian "red line," like "Assad must go," betrayed a common theme: words without meaning from an American president, commitments without follow-up, phrases without plans. In Asia as in Europe, these things get noted.

The American idea is still strong in Asia. Look no further than the brave pro-democracy demonstrators in Hong Kong. But ideas require commitment to back them.

Traveling While Arab

By Alaa Al Aswany

[New York Times](#), October 17, 2014

CAIRO — Some years ago, I was invited to a literary festival in London whose slogan was “change the world.” I had some festival brochures in my hand as I went through the usual entry process at Heathrow Airport. But before I reached the exit, I was surprised to be stopped by a police officer. He examined my passport and leafed through the brochures. Then he asked, “How do you wish to change the world?”

His demeanor was apprehensive, so I took the question seriously and started explaining, in simple terms, that I was an author invited to the festival, that I had not personally chosen the slogan but it implied changing the way people think by means of writing. He seemed persuaded but, all the same, took my passport and I had to wait half an hour before it was returned.

I could provide scores of similar anecdotes. My literary works have been translated into 35 languages, and so I have traveled to various countries for numerous seminars and book signings. Despite the amicable way I am treated by people in the book world, in airports I am just another Arab, a potential terrorist.

I have no complaint about security measures because they have obviously been instituted for my protection as a passenger. Most security personnel perform their duties in a polite and exemplary manner, but some use the procedures to slight you or to make you understand that you are unwelcome or inferior.

The purpose of customs officers at airports is to catch smugglers, but if you look Arabic, or if you are black, or if you are a woman in a head scarf, they make a beeline for you and ask you a series of provocative questions that I doubt have anything to do with smuggling.

“How many cartons of cigarettes have you got with you?” asked an officer, before she opened my suitcase. I replied that I had a single carton. “Are you sure about that?” she responded with a smirk, implying that I was lying.

I cope with these irritations by considering them part of the hassles of my work, but sometimes it becomes too much. Once, at John F. Kennedy International Airport, I was held for two hours because I objected to the officer’s attitude; another time, at Nice, in France, an officer summoned me by curling his index finger, a gesture I find disrespectful. He examined my passport and instead of asking me the purpose of my trip, simply demanded, “What are you doing here?”

“I’ve come to buy some cows,” I told him, in earnest. He looked confused: “Cows? But your passport gives your profession as ‘dentist!’”

“There are some dentists,” I explained (for that is my professional occupation), “whose hobby is collecting cows, and I’m one of them.”

We stood there exchanging sidelong glances until, finally, he returned the passport and let me proceed.

A French police officer of Tunisian origin named Sihem Souid, who worked at Orly Airport in Paris, objected to the racist treatment of Arab and African travelers. She and seven of her colleagues complained about the behavior of other police officers, but nothing was done. Ms. Sihem went on to publish a book, “Omerta dans la police,” that exposed the racist practices at Orly, including the story of an African woman whom an officer referred to as a “filthy black,” and who was strip-searched and photographed, while the officer looked on, laughing.

Why do some officials mete out this kind of racist treatment at airports?

Clay Routledge, an associate professor of psychology at North Dakota State University, argues that some people crave control, and discriminate against others in order to gratify that desire and boost their self-esteem; for others, racism might provide a stark worldview in which “good” whites and Christians were ranged against “evil” blacks and Muslims. According to the scholar Edward W. Said, in his 1981 book “Covering Islam,” Arabs and Muslims were generally portrayed in the Western media as either oil sheikhs or likely terrorists, while Islam itself was presented as a poorly defined and misunderstood abstraction.

It is true, of course, that terrifying and barbarous crimes committed by terrorists in the name of Islam have cast a shadow over the image of all Muslims. But the most basic rule of justice is that criminal responsibility lies with the individual, and not “by association” with a group that happens to share the same religious or ethnic identity. Can all Americans be held responsible for the torture of Iraqi detainees in Abu Ghraib prison?

In fact, the number of Arab and Muslim victims of Islamic extremist terrorism far exceeds the number of Western victims. In the last two years alone, terrorists in Egypt have killed more than 400 Egyptian police officers and soldiers.

Christianity has had its phases of persecution of so-called heretics, sects, Jews and Muslims, as well as its wars of religion, its inquisitions and crusades. Over centuries, such crimes were carried out in the name of a faith that today preaches love and tolerance. No one religion is more bloodthirsty than another, or has a monopoly on violent extremism. Just as Islam can be followed as a humane religion that urges tolerance, so, too, can it be twisted by some into a belief system that justifies terrorism.

If we want to make this world a better place for our children, we have to teach them that, different as we may be in color, sex, culture or religion, we are all human beings who feel and think and suffer in the same way. We must put aside our prejudices and deal with one another on the basis of equality and individual responsibility. Only then will a black or Arab traveler in a Western airport be treated just like anybody else.

Alaa Al Aswany is the author of the novel “The Yacoubian Building” and other books. This article was translated by Russell Harris from the Arabic.

Bipartisan Solutions, Not Blame, Can Help In Managing Ebola

[Washington Post](#), October 17, 2014

THE EBOLA virus reached this country at the height of the 2014 campaign, so perhaps it was inevitable that the political parties would try to exploit it. To Republicans, the situation proves once again that President Obama has failed to protect Americans. In one of the milder versions of this allegation, Louisiana Gov. Bobby Jindal published an op-ed faulting Mr. Obama for spending Centers for Disease Control and Prevention resources on grants for exercise and healthy diets rather than fighting infectious disease. Some Democrats say, meanwhile, that we wouldn’t have to worry about Ebola if not for budget cuts to the CDC and the National Institutes of Health, for which the GOP alone is to blame. As one especially inflammatory TV ad puts it: “Republican cuts kill.”

Refutation of these memes may be a lost cause, but we’ll try anyway. In brief: Ebola is no one’s “fault.” The United States and other nations should have responded far sooner to the outbreak in West Africa. The CDC could have done a better job managing the situation in Dallas, where exposure to a Liberian patient apparently resulted in the infection of at least two nurses. Yet this is an unprecedented challenge for the American health-care system, and everyone involved — from the president to front-line health-care workers — is acting in good faith and, necessarily, learning on the job.

As for budget cuts, it's preposterous to assert either that more money would guarantee a cure or that one party alone is responsible for the alleged lack of funds. As The Post's Fact Checker, Glenn Kessler, concluded after a thorough examination of the budgetary history: "Obama's Republican predecessor oversaw big increases in public-health sector spending, and both Democrats and Republicans in recent years have broadly supported efforts to rein in federal spending. Sequestration resulted from a bipartisan agreement."

When you get past the campaign demagoguery, the Ebola problem has actually revealed fundamental agreement between supposedly pro-government Democrats and supposedly anti-government Republicans. The two parties both think that the United States needs an effective federal government to cope with threats such as Ebola. Mr. Jindal argues that "the federal government has one duty above all: To protect the health, safety and well-being of its citizens." He even maintains that the Constitution's mandate that the federal government protect the states from invasion "should apply as much to infectious disease as to foreign powers."

Now that both parties have revealed their preference for effective national government, they can think more clearly about Washington's budgetary issues. Sequestration is more symptom than cause; the root problem is a general refusal to tackle entitlements, tax breaks and other sacrosanct programs, which leaves the discretionary budget to bear the brunt of deficit reduction. And even if there's no evidence that budget cuts "caused" the mistakes in the Ebola response, it's likely that more resources, more thoughtfully allocated, may be needed in the near future. The broader lesson is to readjust federal priorities so that leaders actually have the capacity to prevent and, if necessary, govern through crises — and not just blame each other for them.

The Mayor's Plan To Replace D.C. General To House The Homeless Is On The Right Track

[Washington Post](#), October 16, 2014

MAYOR Vincent C. Gray (D) released on Tuesday the outlines of a plan to close the city's shelter for homeless families at the former D.C. General Hospital. A day later, his administration celebrated the opening of a \$450,000 children's playground at the site. Cutting that ribbon was an acknowledgment of the difficulty the city faces in closing the dilapidated facility. Until other housing alternatives can be found, the shelter remains the last resort for desperate families.

"We know that D.C. General is not an optimum place for families," said B.B. Otero, deputy mayor for health and human services. "But while families are here, we want to make sure that there's a safe place for the children to use."

Mr. Gray is right to try to make the existing shelter as habitable as possible even as he lays the groundwork for its closure. And he is on the right track in mapping a strategy that would replace the 300-room shelter at D.C. General with smaller shelters across the city. Under the plan released Tuesday, by fall 2015 the city would spend an estimated \$52 million to lease or construct six shelters that would each house up to 50 families. The city has already issued a solicitation for potential properties and, according to an administration official, there has been some interest.

But, as critics pointed out, there will be formidable hurdles in finding suitable facilities in a competitive real estate market, and Mr. Gray's time frame of a year may well be overly optimistic. Neighborhood resistance is likely, too, so it will be important to give the public all the relevant facts. That is the best way to persuade residents that such shelters do not pose a threat. Already in the city are four homeless shelters about the same size as those proposed in Mr. Gray's plan. Most people don't even realize they are there; they don't cause any problems.

Mr. Gray's plan, issued in the final months of his administration, should be a call to action by the D.C. Council and the next mayor. The goal: to empty D.C. General of the children who made the creation of a playground such a sad necessity.

Obama's Failing Strategy In Yemen

[Washington Post](#), October 17, 2014

PRESIDENT OBAMA cited Yemen as a model for U.S. operations against the Islamic State last month, not long after he told an interviewer that the intervention in Libya was his greatest foreign policy regret. In fact, the two countries offer similar lessons in the deficiencies of Mr. Obama's strategy. By backing local forces with airpower in Libya, the United States and its allies were able to overthrow a murderous regime — but, as Mr. Obama acknowledged, the failure to assist with building a state afterward has facilitated Libya's collapse into chaos.

Now Yemen appears in danger of disintegrating, as sectarian insurgents backed by Iran capture large parts of the country's north, even while al-Qaeda forces surge in the south. Once again a narrowly focused U.S. engagement has helped make the breakdown possible.

The Obama administration has conducted extensive military operations in Yemen, but they have been strictly aimed at carrying out strikes against al-Qaeda operatives believed to be plotting against the United States. U.S. trainers in the country have worked with counterterrorism forces, eschewing an attempt to build a reliable national army. While U.S. diplomats and envoys such as CIA Director John Brennan helped to broker the political transition that removed former dictator Ali Abdullah Saleh after 33 years in office, only minimal resources have gone toward building Yemeni political institutions, such as courts and civil society.

Now the administration is watching as the political and security order it backed unravels. Insurgents known as Houthis, who adhere to an offshoot of Shiite Islamism, first captured the capital, Sanaa, late last month and dictated terms to U.S.-backed president Abed Rabbo Mansour Hadi. Now they have seized a major Red Sea port that contains Yemen's largest oil refinery and are continuing to advance southward. As government forces crumble or disappear, al-Qaeda is expanding its hold over parts of the south, where an independence movement is also reviving.

A State Department spokesman said Wednesday that the administration is not sure what the Houthis' objectives are; Yemen-watchers believe they could range from forcing changes in a proposed federalization scheme for the country to creating a new state under the Houthis' control. But the movement's hostility toward the United States and its principal allies in the region is not in doubt. U.S. officials believe the Houthis have received materiel and training from Iran; their slogan, including the phrase "death to America," is taken from the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps and Lebanon's Hezbollah. Saudi Arabia, which joined one of the Yemeni government's six military campaigns against the Houthis before 2010, sees the movement as a major threat.

The Houthis' surge may make it impossible for the Obama administration to continue critical operations against al-Qaeda, which reportedly have included 19 drone strikes this year alone. It should force a reexamination of Mr. Obama's model of managing threats from jihadist movements with narrowly focused training and advising of local forces and no effort to help build national institutions. Interventions that ignore the need to create functioning political systems and professional forces that can ensure domestic security only open the door to failed states — and heightened threats to the United States.

Is Sex Only For Rich People?

By Catherine Rampell

[Washington Post](#), October 16, 2014

America has decided: Sex is for rich people. Non-procreative sex in particular.

How else would you explain the trap we're laying for poor people who deign to get it on?

Our country apparently doesn't want low-income Americans to have free access to birth control, either by compelling all insurance plans to offer it or by adequately funding public reproductive health programs. In many schools — predominantly located in low-income, high-teen-pregnancy areas — we don't even teach kids how contraception works. We also don't want them to have easy access to abortions when they inevitably get pregnant because they're not using birth control, with states such as Texas and Mississippi trying to shutter their few remaining abortion clinics.

Then we don't help them very much after they birth those unplanned kids, instead publicly chastising irresponsible single mothers for having babies they can't afford and offering little assistance in the form of child care, education or cash. Dumping unwanted children onto the child welfare system isn't exactly celebrated, either.

By process of elimination, the solution for low-income people is to never, ever have sex. So seems the logic behind many of these policies: If only we make it harder for people to have access to family planning services, and financially painful to raise children who predictably result from sex in the absence of those services, people who cannot afford to raise children will choose celibacy.

This, of course, is magical thinking. The belief that we can get entire classes of Americans to practice abstinence until they're financially ready for marriage and children is a right-wing delusion on par with the left-wing delusions that go into socialism: Both rely on a fundamental miscalculation about human nature. If the socialists wished to legislate away self-interest, the moralists wish to legislate away libido.

Data show just how difficult it is to keep those unmarried libidos in check. Tawdry though it may be, nearly 9 in 10 young, unwed adults have had sex, according to the National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy.

Which is why subsidies for family planning services make a good deal of sense. And when I say services, I mean not only financial access to contraception but also education about how it works. Study after study has documented astounding amounts of confusion and misinformation about baby-making. One in 5 unmarried young men, for example, incorrectly believes that having sex standing up is a form of birth control. Among women who have unintended births because they weren't using contraception, about a third say they hadn't thought they actually could get pregnant, perhaps because they'd had sex before and never previously landed "in the family way." But who could really blame young'uns for their ignorance and silly extrapolations, when even a former congressman, Todd Akin, once declared that an effective form of contraception is a woman's internal desire to "shut that whole thing down"?

It should be no wonder, then, that more than half of all pregnancies are unintended, and that the proportion is 70 percent for single women in their 20s, as Isabel Sawhill discusses in her thoughtful book, "Generation Unbound: Drifting into Sex and Parenthood without Marriage."

Government spending on family planning offers a huge return on investment, not just for families but for the public. In 2010, every \$1 invested in helping women avoid pregnancies they didn't want saved \$5.68 in Medicaid expenditures that otherwise would have been needed, according to the Guttmacher Institute. Once upon a time, both left and right understood this calculus. Title X, the federal family planning program that primarily serves low-income women (and whose funding has fallen 18 percent over

the last decade, after adjusting for inflation) was passed under President Nixon with unanimous Senate support. Today this and other federal programs that democratize family planning (including the Affordable Care Act) are subject to constant gutting and mockery, with pundits referring to advocates of affordable birth control as “sluts,” and politicians asking why the state should be subsidizing “recreational” activities like sex.

America is increasingly turning into a two-track society when it comes to fertility decisions, with high-income, highly educated Americans availed of better and more options (even, it turns out, employer-provided egg-freezing services); and low-income women drifting into childbearing that they themselves say they’re not ready for. Despite what opponents say, improving access to family planning services and reversible contraceptives is not about encouraging sex — biology takes care of this already — or that false boogeyman of sterilization. It is about giving low-income women the same control over when, and with whom, they have children, as is afforded to their higher-income sisters.

Stock Market Turmoil And The Global Debt Trap

By Robert J. Samuelson

[Washington Post](#), October 16, 2014

Six years after the onset of the financial crisis, the world still has too much debt. The total in 2013, according to the McKinsey Global Institute, came to about \$186 trillion. This includes government debt, corporate bonds and loans to individuals, families and businesses. Since 2008, the amount has actually increased by about \$34 trillion. The numbers are so large that it’s hard for ordinary mortals to connect them with the world economy’s ability to grow at a decent and self-sustained pace. Doubts about this underlie the stock market’s recent turmoil.

Let it be said that, as with most major market moves, we usually know only in retrospect whether they reflected basic economic realities or just a shift in crowd psychology (Ebola?). “Global outlook [is] nowhere near as bad as markets suggest,” Capital Economics, a forecasting firm, wrote clients. This is possible.

If the market’s wild swings transcend mood, the explanation may involve the potentially dangerous interaction between high debt and low economic growth. To service their debts, borrowers — governments as well as companies and individuals — need rising income, whether from taxes, profits or salaries. If income stagnates or declines, paying debts’ interest or principal becomes harder.

Worse, borrowers and lenders may get caught in a self-destructive, vicious cycle that ends with deflation (falling prices). To make loan repayments, borrowers curb spending. But spending is the lifeblood of modern economies, so if too many governments, people or firms cut back, the economy doesn’t generate the income that the debtors need to meet their loan commitments. What’s logical for a few debtors becomes catastrophic if everyone does it. There’s a debt trap that threatens growth.

By itself, the slowdown in global economic growth, predicted by the International Monetary Fund and others, is fairly mild. It’s undesirable but not disastrous. What would make it disastrous is if it triggers a broader and deeper economic pullback: a new recession or financial crisis — involving defaults, bankruptcies and panics. The consequences could be devastating, because the world hasn’t yet recovered from the 2008-09 crisis. Any deflation would increase debt burdens by forcing borrowers to repay with costlier money.

A new report from four economists echoes these fears. First, they note that worldwide debt — again, governmental and private — has continued to grow. Since 2008, it has increased from 174 percent of global gross domestic product to 212 percent. The biggest increases occurred among “emerging market”

countries, led by China. Its debt soared by 72 percentage points to 217 percent of GDP in 2013. In 2013, similar debt/GDP percentages were 264 for the United States, 257 for the euro zone (the 18 countries using the euro) and 411 for Japan.

As these figures suggest, there's no "right" or "wrong" amount of debt. The correct amount depends on how fast a country's economy is growing, the level of interest rates, how well the debt is invested and — a crucial factor — lenders' faith that they will be repaid. If confidence vanishes, trouble looms.

Called the Geneva Report, the study warns against the "poisonous combination" of high debt and low economic growth. It says that emerging-market countries "could be at the epicenter of the next crisis." Presumably, this would mean losses on public and private bonds and loans. The study also says the euro zone is vulnerable. (The study's authors: Vincent Reinhart of Morgan Stanley, Lucrezia Reichlin of the London Business School, Philip Lane of Trinity College Dublin and Luigi Buttiglione of Brevan Howard Investment Products.)

It's not clear how weak the global economy is. There are (relative) bright spots. Both the United States and Great Britain have achieved moderate growth, in part because their households have "deleveraged" — that is, cut debt. From 2007 to 2013, U.S. households reduced mortgage debt by \$1.2 trillion through repayment and default, says the Geneva Report. Businesses have done something similar: They've refinanced old debt at lower interest rates and longer maturities. For households and firms, lower debt burdens free up more cash for present spending.

The roughly 25 percent decline in oil prices since June — most of which will be passed along to drivers at the pump — is another possible positive. Assuming the cuts hold, gasoline prices could drop to close to \$3 a gallon with annual U.S. consumer savings approaching \$100 billion, says oil analyst Larry Goldstein. (However, Goldstein warns that falling prices may signal a faltering economy.)

Can we avoid a global debt trap and regain faster economic growth rates that foster stability and human well-being? Whatever debt's virtues as a first response to deep slumps, it has its limits. We cannot promote prosperity simply by piling new debts atop the old. We need to build a stronger economic foundation.

Read more from Robert Samuelson's archive.

Ebola Challenges America's Ability To Adapt

By Michael Gerson

[Washington Post](#), October 17, 2014

In any health care setting, it is wise to listen to the nurses, who see all. Their reports from Dallas about the initial procedures used in treating Thomas Eric Duncan are appalling. Safety suits with exposed necklines left nurses to cover skin with tape. When tape is removed, it abrades the skin. One health expert I consulted described this practice in dealing with Ebola as "moronic."

Proper protocols are now in place. But Ebola in America has been an exacting and brutal teacher.

First, we have seen that the infectiousness of Ebola increases as a patient grows sicker and the level of the virus spikes in his or her bloodstream. To the general public, this should provide some reassurance. When a patient begins to feel weak and achy at home, he or she is less likely to spread the disease. None of the people who lived in tight quarters with Duncan has (as of this writing) reported infection.

But for health workers treating very ill patients, the danger of infection is dramatically elevated. Any crack in a glove, any touching of the eye, might be enough. And when a patient's viral load is sky-high, it is likely to be found even in his or her saliva and mucus. Theoretically, even a cough spraying sputum

onto exposed skin might transmit the disease. A person in this condition would be too sick to walk the streets. The risk is to health-care workers who are not properly -protected.

Second, we've learned that providing protection to health workers is a skill not possessed by every hospital. Reading a protocol off a Web site is one thing. Implementing a protocol, with perfection as the only acceptable standard, is another. It is the distance between reading a book on batting and taking a pitch in the major leagues. Most hospitals are poorly prepared to take very ill Ebola patients. This demands either the immediate deployment of federal Ebola "SWAT teams" when a case is reported or the careful transfer of patients to more competent facilities. The hurt feelings of local hospitals or mayors should matter not at all.

Third, we've seen that the federal response to Ebola has had serious weaknesses under stress. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention assumed that any large hospital would know what it was doing in isolating an Ebola patient. The assumption was wrong. The CDC allowed a nurse with an elevated temperature who had been heavily involved with Duncan's treatment to board a plane. This showed inadequate respect for the disease and a tin ear on matters of public trust.

The knowledge and dedication of American public health officials are unequalled. But the implementation and judgment of public health systems have sometimes been seriously flawed.

So how should our political system respond? Not an easy question to answer, especially three weeks before an election. Those who pursue political sport during a health emergency — either finding a symbol of liberal incompetence or a symbol of inadequate public investment — are not helping matters. Fighting infectious disease is an essential federal role, not an ideological metaphor.

The real questions are: Can government learn from its mistakes? And will it be allowed to? The goal is to strengthen the current disease response and be better prepared for the next one (which might, unlike Ebola, involve the serious threat of a large public outbreak in the United States). Somehow, even during a politically charged season, our Ebola debate must be an exercise in learning lessons.

In all this, some perspective is necessary. By the end of the year, according to the World Health Organization, there could be up to 10,000 new cases of Ebola in West Africa each week. Information from inside the affected countries is already growing sketchy as ties to the outside world are cut. This problem will not be solved by canceling the few remaining commercial flights out of Monrovia. The economic, political and social collapse of Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone would swell the flow of refugees and increase the risk of outbreaks in other populous parts of Africa or in even more distant places, such as India.

By all means, do what is necessary in Dallas. But billions in spending and thousands of hospital beds are now urgently required to prevent a human catastrophe involving the destabilization of West Africa. The spread of a global pandemic would make Ebola harder to fight for everyone.

Fight Fear Of Ebola With The Facts

By Richard E. Besser

[Washington Post](#), October 15, 2014

When you work in public health, you become tuned in to fear. And the fear level in the United States just ticked up a notch. All our high-tech equipment, protective gear and disease management didn't protect two Dallas health-care workers from Ebola. When government officials tell us we are safe and then caregivers get sick, what does this do to trust?

Wearing protective equipment seems straightforward, but it isn't. When you remove all those layers, you can contaminate yourself, and avoiding that takes training, practice and supervision. The Centers for

Disease Control and Prevention made a tactical error when it said that any hospital in the United States could safely manage a patient with Ebola if it followed the proper protocol. Sure, any hospital with sufficient training and expertise in handling infectious disease can do this, but it may be that only four U.S. hospitals meet that standard — the ones with specialized units created for this kind of emergency. Transmission in the first regular hospital to treat an Ebola patient stokes fear, and fear is one of Ebola's most common side effects.

This week, I was scheduled to speak at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland on "Pandemics, Public Health, and Political Change: The Critical Importance of Communication." I've given the talk before. It's a reflection on how we handled the 2009 flu pandemic when I worked at the CDC, as fear was outracing the disease. The weapons we used to attack the fear — transparency, truth and constant communication — were critical. It helped Americans understand what they were facing and what to do about it, and it helped lessen the impact of the pandemic. Ironically, the university canceled my visit because I had recently returned from a 10-day trip covering the outbreak in Africa. The level of risk posed by my appearance was vanishingly small, but fear won anyway.

Sharona Hoffman, the professor of law and bioethics who invited me, wrote: "Unfortunately, The University President and Provost have decided against having you come to campus on October 15th. Although they understand how small the risk is, they felt that we needed to err on the side of extreme caution because we don't have the ability to ask all potential attendees if they feel comfortable with the situation."

Would I like to address the students via Skype? I turned them down. I did not want to feed the idea that anyone who has been to West Africa, even if not sick, poses a risk.

Infectious disease often leads to irrational behavior. It's a primal defense. We saw this during the early days of the AIDS pandemic, as infected children were barred from schools and some health professionals wouldn't provide care. We are seeing it again now with Ebola. Proactively, before I returned from Liberia, ABC News addressed employee concerns during a call with experts from the CDC. It made sure that employees could ask questions of some of the world's leading experts on Ebola transmission. It also made sure anyone who was uncomfortable with my presence knew they could keep their distance.

Most employees have been willing to work with me, but some have chosen not to. I respect their right to make that choice, but I've been surprised by how many colleagues have waved from across the room and quickly made an exit. Others won't enter my office. A colleague told me she received a note from two mothers of children her daughter plays with. Would she be having contact with me at work? If so, they didn't want her daughter to play with their children for 21 days, the longest known incubation period for Ebola.

My post-Liberia appearance on "The View" was initially canceled because some felt uncomfortable being near me, but it was rescheduled after I appeared on "Good Morning America." The hosts of "The View" weren't just trying to make me feel welcome when they hugged me after I walked onto the set — they were trying to reduce fear in everyone.

The best way to fight fear and stigma is with facts. The fact is that many viruses are easily transmitted, but Ebola is not one of them. You can get infected with the flu, the common cold, chicken pox and measles from someone who doesn't even know that he or she is sick. That is one reason those viruses can spread so quickly. To get infected with Ebola, you need direct contact with the bodily fluids of a patient who is symptomatic of the disease — someone very sick indeed. This is not casual contact. Yes, a nurse and another health-care worker have caught it. In some Ebola outbreaks, 25 percent of cases Ebola are in the medical workers who are taking care of Ebola patients, and the rest are mostly

seen in those who provide care in the home and who have touched the bodies of victims at funerals. You cannot get Ebola walking through an airport or speaking to someone with the disease.

It's natural for people to think, "Wow, even if you're taking every precaution in the world, like those health-care workers did, you can catch Ebola." But this is wrong. You are putting yourself in much greater danger if you don't get a flu shot than if you talk to someone from West Africa.

You cannot catch Ebola in a lecture hall hearing about the power of communication during a public health crisis. I expect universities to fight this kind of fear, not feed it. What we need to do is communicate, as strongly and as often as we can, what the real risks are and aren't.

Nothing To Fear But Panic Itself

By David Ignatius

[Washington Post](#), October 17, 2014

Richard Preston, whose 1994 book "The Hot Zone" brought the Ebola virus terrifyingly to life for readers, once described how, during his research, his biohazard suit had ripped open, exposing him to a potentially fatal toxin.

"I started to feel giddy," Preston wrote in "Panic in Level 4," a 2008 collection of essays. "It was an intoxicating rush of fear, a sensation that all I needed to do was relax and let the fear take hold, and I could drift away on waves of panic, screaming for help."

You could feel a shiver of panic coursing through the American body politic this week as the country struggled with a metastatic set of crises: the spread of the Ebola virus, the surge of Islamic State terrorists and the buckling global economy. Listening to the news, many Americans must have felt a small version of Preston's "intoxicating rush of fear" that the protection layer had been breached.

President Obama tried to speak calmly to a rattled nation on Wednesday, describing how he had kissed and embraced nurses at Emory University Hospital who had treated Ebola patients safely. Don't panic, was the unspoken message. It's safe. Listening to the president, you couldn't help but wonder if he was straining to keep a polarized, fearful country from losing its cool.

Panic is a natural human response to danger, but it's one that severely compounds the risk. Frightened people want to protect themselves, sometimes without thinking about others. Often, they get angry and want to find someone to blame for catastrophe. Inevitably, they spread information without checking whether it's true.

Fear brings out the best in some people and the worst in others. It's a test of character, for individuals and nations. That's why the stories of the New York City firefighters rushing upstairs to their deaths in the twin towers on the morning of Sept. 11, 2001, became a kind of national legend. It showed the human spirit in its most selfless form.

We can't all be heroic firefighters, and this week we began to see a display of less noble emotions. Inevitably, the blame game began: How had Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital misdiagnosed Ebola victim Thomas Eric Duncan and allowed two nurses to become infected? Fair question, but criticism soon escalated to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, probably the world's best resource in combating infectious disease and one of the first responders to the Ebola epidemic. Rather than cheering the firefighters, people were sniping at them.

My own business, the news media, has a peculiar responsibility in times like these. We have to deliver information quickly and reliably, and also hold officials accountable for their performance — all without unnecessarily frightening people or contributing to the kind of hysteria that makes public-health

measures more difficult. This role is harder in an unfiltered, Internet-driven media world, where careful reporting can look to some people like suppression of information.

One of the best comments I saw came from Shepard Smith, an anchor for Fox News, a network not always a voice for reason and calm. On Wednesday afternoon, Smith admonished viewers not to panic about Ebola. He was passionate, and maybe you can argue that journalists shouldn't give medical advice, but here's part of what he said:

"Today, given what we know, you should have no concerns about Ebola at all. None. I promise. Unless a medical professional has contacted you personally and told you of some sort of possible exposure, fear not. Do not listen to the hysterical voices on the radio and the television or read the fear-provoking words online. The people who say and write hysterical things are being very irresponsible. . . .

"Suggestions have been made publicly that leaders and medical professionals may be lying to us. Those suggestions are completely without basis and fact. There is no evidence of any kind of which we at Fox News are aware that leaders have lied about anything regarding Ebola. . . . There is no Ebola spreading in America. Should that change, our reporting will change."

Smith was hammered online for telling Fox viewers (and everyone else) to calm down. But he was right. Amazon may be offering books with titles like "Ebola: The Ultimate Survival Guide." But the best advice for now is what Smith offered viewers: Don't panic. And get a flu shot.

On Ebola, We Need A Dose Of Candor

By Eugene Robinson

[Washington Post](#), October 17, 2014

Let's make a deal: We'll all promise not to panic about Ebola if the experts — especially those at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention — agree to get their stories straight.

They should begin by giving a better explanation of why they have concluded it would be wrong to "stop the flights" arriving from the Ebola "hot zone," beginning with the fact that there are no such flights: There is no direct commercial air service between the countries at the epicenter of the outbreak — Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea — and the United States.

Travelers from those countries must make one or more intermediate stops to get here, meaning that any travel ban would have to target individuals based on nationality or recent visits to the affected countries. Experts should explain why this idea is neither crazy nor politically incorrect but simply, in their professional opinion, inadvisable.

The risk that limiting travel to and from West Africa would hamper efforts to control the outbreak is real. Saying that charter flights could be arranged for aid workers ignores the necessarily decentralized and ad hoc nature of responses to this kind of emergency. Doctors, nurses and other volunteers need to be able to go into a hot zone when they are ready, not when seats happen to open up on a charter.

They also need to know beforehand that they will be able to rotate out of the zone in a timely fashion. There is an obvious role that military or charter aircraft can play in evacuating aid workers who have been in close contact with Ebola patients. For those with less risk of exposure — those who, say, could advise health officials in affected countries but not actually treat victims of the disease — travel restrictions would serve no purpose except to make them think twice about going.

With polls showing majority support for some kind of travel ban, CDC Director Tom Frieden and others should not just state their position on the issue but show a willingness to engage with those who disagree. Experts should acknowledge that restrictions might help keep out the Ebola virus in the short run — but would, in their view, put Americans more at risk in the long run.

Pressed at a House committee hearing Thursday about travel curbs, Frieden gave a terse answer: “We will consider any options to better protect Americans.” Asked about other countries that have imposed restrictions, Frieden said he was unfamiliar with the details. Really? Wouldn’t that be important to know?

Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, did a somewhat better job at the hearing of explaining the consensus view: It is better to interview, track and, if necessary, quarantine the 100 to 150 travelers entering the United States from West Africa daily than risk the likelihood that at least a few infected people would manage to circumvent any ban.

Health experts also need to explain what went wrong in Dallas, Cleveland and points in between.

With two nurses at Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital in Dallas now being treated for Ebola, it is obvious that normal protocols for dealing with a highly infectious disease are not adequate for this virus. The most urgent task for the CDC and the National Institutes of Health is making sure that health workers nationwide — the Americans most at risk — are armed with procedures and equipment that can keep them safe.

It is understandable, perhaps, that the Dallas hospital was initially unprepared to handle Ebola patient Thomas Eric Duncan and that nurses involved in his early treatment might have been exposed. But now every hospital in the country should be on notice. The vast majority of health-care professionals will never deal with an Ebola case — but cases “could present anywhere,” as Rep. Jan Schakowsky (D-Ill.) said at Thursday’s hearing, which means that all nurses and doctors need to be prepared.

There also has to be an explanation of how the CDC handled the case of Amber Joy Vinson, the second nurse with the virus. First we were told that she should not have traveled home from Cleveland to Dallas on a commercial airliner. Then CDC officials admitted that they cleared her to take the flight, even though she had a fever of 99.5 degrees. Then we learned that she might have been symptomatic — and thus potentially infectious — while on that Frontier Airlines plane.

The thing is, Americans are anxious about Ebola but not panicked. This will change, however, unless experts speak more honestly about the nature of the threat.

Charles Krauthammer: Ebola Vs. Civil Liberties

By Charles Krauthammer

[Washington Post](#), October 17, 2014

Unnervingly, the U.S. public health services remain steps behind the Ebola virus. Contact tracing is what we do, Centers for Disease Control Director Tom Frieden assured the nation. It will stop the epidemic “in its tracks.” And yet nurses Nina Pham and Amber Vinson, who developed Ebola, were not even among the 48 contacts the CDC was initially following.

Nor were any of the doctors and nurses who treated the “index patient,” Thomas Duncan. No one even had a full list of caregivers.

The other reassurance was: Not to worry. We know what we’re doing. We have protocols. When, however, we got the first Ebola transmission in the United States, it was blamed on a “breach in protocol.”

Translation: “Don’t blame us. The nurse screwed up.” The nurses union was not amused. Frieden had to walk that back the next day, saying he didn’t mean to blame anyone.

Frieden had said that “the care of Ebola can be done safely, but it is hard to do it safely.” Meaning: In theory, it’s easy; in practice, very dangerous. Unfortunately, that’s not what he said on Day One. When you hear it two weeks later, you begin to wonder.

These missteps raise questions of competence, candor and false confidence. But the problem is deeper. And it rests not in our doctors but in ourselves.

In the face of a uniquely dangerous threat, we Americans have trouble recalibrating our traditional (and laudable) devotion to individual rights and civil liberties. That is the fundamental reason we've been so slow in getting serious about Ebola. Consider:

1. Privacy.

Pham's identity was initially withheld. In normal circumstances, privacy deserves absolute respect. But these are not normal circumstances. We're talking about a possible epidemic by an unseen pathogen that kills 70 percent of its victims. Contact tracing is the key to stopping it, we've been told. What faster way to alert anyone who might have had contact with Pham than releasing her name? Why lose 24 hours during which people have to guess if they'd had contact with someone carrying the virus?

2. Quarantine.

When Duncan was first hospitalized, the CDC said it would locate his contacts and check regularly for symptoms. For the secondary and tertiary contacts, this made sense. But not for those in the inner "concentric circle." They had had close contact with Duncan and were living in an apartment requiring massive decontamination. They should have been quarantined immediately.

Yet initially they were not. In fact, the word quarantine was not uttered by a single authority during the first news conference revealing Duncan's illness.

It's understandable. Quarantine is the ultimate violation of civil liberties. Having committed no crime, having done no wrong, you are sentenced to house arrest or banishment. It's unfair. It's, well, un-American. But when an epidemic threatens, we do it because we must.

3. Evacuation.

Why have we been treating Ebola patients at their local hospital? This is insane. They don't have the expertise or the training. They will make mistakes — as we've now seen repeatedly at Texas Health Presbyterian.

Besides, training and equipping every hospital in America to treat this rare disease would be ridiculously expensive and 99 percent wasted. Every Ebola patient should be evacuated to a specialized regional isolation center, such as the ones in Atlanta, Omaha or Bethesda.

Not because these facilities possess some unique treatment. There is no treatment known to cure the disease. But they know how to prevent contagion. Local hospitals don't. It took 15 days and Amber Vinson to wake the authorities up to this obvious reality.

4. Travel bans.

British Airways has already canceled all flights to the affected countries in West Africa. We haven't. A couple more cases of imported Ebola and we will.

Why are we waiting? The CDC argues that a travel ban would stop the flow of medical assistance to West Africa. This is silly. Simply make an exception for health-care workers. They apply to federal authorities, who charter their flights (or use military aircraft already headed there) and monitor their movements until 21 days after their return home. Done.

President Obama, in his messianic period, declared that choosing between security and liberty was a false choice. On the contrary. It is the eternal dilemma of every free society. Politics is the very process of finding some equilibrium between these two competing values.

Regarding terrorism, we've developed a fairly reasonable balance. But it took time. With Ebola, we don't have time. Viruses don't wait. The sooner we reset the balance — the sooner we get serious — the safer we will be.

Obama Needs To Dial Back His Syria Strategy

By Fareed Zakaria

[Washington Post](#), October 17, 2014

From the start, President Obama's Syria policy has foundered because of a gap between words and deeds. And he's done it again. Having declared that the aim of U.S. policy is to "degrade and ultimately destroy" the Islamic State, Obama now finds himself pressured to escalate military action in Syria. This is a path destined for failure. In fact, the administration should abandon its lofty rhetoric and make clear that it is focused on a strategy against the Islamic State that is actually achievable: containment.

Escalation in Syria cannot meet American objectives and is almost certain to produce chaos and unintended consequences. The central reality is that Washington has no serious local partners on the ground. It is important to understand that the Free Syrian Army doesn't actually exist. A Congressional Research Service report points out that the name does not refer to any "organized command and control structure with national reach." The director of national intelligence has testified that the opposition to the Bashar al-Assad regime is composed of 1,500 separate militias. We call a bunch of these militias — which are anti-Assad and also anti-Islamist (we hope) — the Free Syrian Army.

Scholar Joshua Landis — whose blog Syria Comment is an essential source — estimates that the Assad regime controls about half of Syrian territory, though much more of the population. The Islamic State controls about one-third of the country, and the other militias control a little less than 20 percent. But the largest and most effective of these non-Islamic State groups are al-Qaeda-affiliated and also deadly enemies of the United States. The non-jihadi groups collectively control less than 5 percent of Syria. Landis writes that, according to opposition leaders, Washington is supporting about 75 of these groups.

A U.S. strategy of escalating airstrikes in Syria — even if coupled with ground forces — would wish that the weakest and most disorganized forces in the country somehow become the strongest, first defeating the Islamic State, then the Assad regime, all while fighting off Jabhat al-Nusra and Khorasan. The chance that all this will happen is remote. Far more likely, heavy bombings in Syria will produce chaos and instability on the ground, further destroying Syria and promoting the free-for-all in which jihadi groups thrive.

Critics are sure this policy would have been easy three years ago, when the opposition to Assad was more secular and democratic. This is a fantasy. It's true that the demonstrations against the Assad regime in the initial months seemed to be carried out by more secular and liberal people. This was also true in Libya and Egypt. But over time, more organized, passionate and religious forces triumphed. This is a familiar pattern in revolutions — including the French, Russian and Iranian. They are begun by liberals and taken over by radicals.

For any strategy to work in Syria, it needs both a military and a political component. The military element is weak. The political one is nonexistent.

The crucial, underlying reason for the violence in Iraq and Syria is a Sunni revolt against governments in Baghdad and Damascus that they view as hostile, apostate regimes. That revolt, in turn, has been fueled by Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Qatar, each supporting its own favorite Sunni groups, which has only added to the complexity. On the other side, Iran has supported the Shiite and Alawite regimes, ensuring that this sectarian struggle is also regional.

The political solution, presumably, is some kind of power-sharing arrangement in those two capitals. But this is not something that the United States can engineer in Syria. It tried in Iraq, but despite 170,000 troops, tens of billions of dollars and David Petraeus's skillful leadership, the deals Petraeus brokered started unraveling within months of his departure, well before American troops had left. This is not a part

of the world where power-sharing and pluralism have worked — with the exception of Lebanon, and that happened after a bloody 15-year civil war in which one out of every 20 people in the country was slaughtered.

The only strategy against the Islamic State that has any chance of working is containment — bolstering the neighbors (who are threatened far more than the United States) that are willing to fight militarily and politically. They include, most importantly, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey and the Gulf states. The greatest challenge is to get the Iraqi government to make serious concessions to Sunnis so that they are recruited into the fight, something that has not happened so far. All of this should be coupled with counterterrorism, which means strikes at key Islamic State targets, as well as measures to track foreign fighters, stop their movements, intercept their funds, and protect the neighbors and the West from a jihadi infiltration spilling over.

The Obama administration is pursuing many elements of this strategy. It should be forthright about its objectives and abandon its grander rhetoric, which is setting itself up for escalation and failure.

Read more from Fareed Zakaria's archive, follow him on Twitter or subscribe to his updates on Facebook.

WILMINGTON NEWS JOURNAL STORIES

Dropping Aetna From Medicaid Means Job Losses

By Jonathan Starkey

[Wilmington \(DE\) News Journal](#), October 16, 2014

About two hundred Delaware-based healthcare jobs will be lost at the end of the year after the state department of Health and Social Services announced Wednesday it will no longer offer Medicaid coverage through one of its managed care organizations, Delaware Physicians Care Inc.

Some employees working with Delaware Physicians Care, an Aetna health plan, will have opportunities to work in other plans in Maryland in Pennsylvania, said Aetna spokesman Walt Cherniak. But by Jan. 1, the 202 jobs associated with the Aetna plan will be gone.

"We're going to be talking to our employees on a one on one basis," Cherniak said. "There will be job reductions, it is just impossible to say right now how many there will be."

About 137,000 Delaware Medicaid patients are enrolled in an Aetna Delaware Physicians Care plan, meaning those patients will have to transfer over to a Highmark or United Healthcare plan when open enrollment begins Nov. 15. Currently, 54,000 Medicaid patients are enrolled in a United Healthcare plan.

Stephen Groff, director of the state's Medicaid program, said the Delaware Department of Health and Social Services will send out supplemental enrollment materials to educate Medicaid patients about their options and "reinforce that they have a choice."

"We'll be identifying those populations that perhaps have the greatest risk or transition needs," Groff said Thursday. "The bottom line is nothing ever goes perfectly and we realize that. It's just very important for people to understand if they have a concern or an issue they need to reach out to us."

Rita Landgraf, DHSS secretary, said the department was ready to move forward with three managed care organizations but financial negotiations failed with Aetna.

"We actually thought three carriers would be the appropriate level," Landgraf said. "Unfortunately at the end of the day we we couldn't come to an agreement with Aetna."

About 230,000 Delawareans rely on Medicaid, an insurance program for low-income residents funded jointly by the federal and state governments. Roughly 200,000 of those patients get care through

one of the managed care organizations. More than \$1.6 billion flows through the managed care system in Delaware.

Medicaid is one of the state's largest public expenses, costing state taxpayers about \$700 million annually.

President Obama's health care law expanded eligibility for the program up to 138 percent of the federal poverty level. More than 8,000 newly eligible Delawareans have enrolled since implementation of the expansion last year, and Landgraf expects that number to grow.

The federal government is picking up the vast majority of the cost for those new patients.

Landgraf acknowledged Thursday that dropping Aetna could mean short-term job losses, but suggested many of those workers in direct support roles could find new jobs.

"Those jobs don't go away," Landgraf said. "The other carriers will need to get that level of personnel to support the population. So the jobs themselves don't go away. They just might not be part of that company. I thought that the Aetna team on the ground was exceptional."

Those who choose United Healthcare plans could still be shut out of A.I. du Pont Hospital for Children after contract talks between Nemours and United Healthcare fell apart this spring. Parents of children requiring specialty care were urged to find new providers in Philadelphia or Baltimore.

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Delaware Poll: Legalize Marijuana

By Jonathan Starkey

[Wilmington \(DE\) News Journal](#), October 16, 2014

Want legal weed in Delaware?

You're easily in the majority, according to a new University of Delaware poll that finds 56 percent of Delawareans support legalization of marijuana use.

The university polled 902 Delaware adults between Sept. 10 and 22, finding just 39 percent opposed to legalization. Delawareans older than 60 and self-identified conservatives were the only groups to express deep opposition, while young adults and liberals drove the support.

Support for legalization crossed racial and geographic boundaries, with poll respondents in all three counties saying they back legal marijuana.

"I would say the numbers suggest solid support for fully legalizing marijuana in Delaware," said Paul Brewer, the political communications professor at the University of Delaware who supervised the poll. "The results also reflect what's going on in public opinion at the national level, where the trends show a growing majority favoring legalization.

Only Colorado and Washington state have legalized marijuana, regulating and taxing sales. Sixteen other states and the District of Columbia have replaced criminal penalties with fines for those found in possession of small amounts of marijuana, a step known as decriminalization.

Voters in several other states will consider ballot measures next month to loosen marijuana laws.

Of course, public support does not always accurately predict political support. Gov. Jack Markell remains opposed to full legalization of the drug, a spokeswoman said on Thursday.

"Since last year, the governor and his office have been talking with legislators and others about decriminalizing the possession of a small amount of marijuana and replacing criminal penalties with civil fines," said Kelly Bachman, Markell's spokeswoman.

“While the governor would not support full legalization at this time without further studies and evidence of its consequences, he expects to have more conversations about reducing the criminal penalties on small amounts of marijuana in the months to come.”

The poll does show a breakdown along generational and ideological lines.

Opposition to legal marijuana was most pronounced among Delawareans aged 60 or older. Just 36.9 percent of respondents in that age group favored legalization, while 68 percent younger than 30 supported the move.

Among respondents who identified as conservative, just 39.2 percent favored legalization. Among liberals, 73 percent said they think marijuana should be legal.

Across the rest of the poll, support is significant. Majorities of minorities and white Delawareans support legalization. Voters in all three counties support making the drug legal, though the margin is slim in Sussex County, Delaware’s most conservative county.

In Sussex, 48 percent of respondents said they would support legalization, while 47.3 percent said they oppose the move.

“The poll just shows there is broad support for this,” said Delaware Sen. Bryan Townsend, a Newark Democrat who favors legalization of marijuana. “I hope this is a wake-up call to the General Assembly that a majority of Delawareans support us moving in this direction.”

Directing criminal justice resources to combat marijuana is a distraction to addressing more problematic drug crimes and substance abuse.

“I think we should be focusing on addiction,” Townsend said. “We should be focused on crime. We should be focused on community safety. Marijuana does not really seem to relate closely to any of those things.”

Legislation introduced earlier this year by state Rep. Helene Keeley, of Wilmington would have allowed Delawareans to legally possess up to an ounce of marijuana for personal use, without regulating and taxing sales of the drug.

Facing political opposition, that bill was scrapped.

A House committee later passed separate legislation from Keeley that would have replaced criminal penalties with \$250 civil fines for anyone 21 or older in Delaware found in possession of an ounce or less of marijuana.

Current Delaware law prosecutes simple marijuana possession as a misdemeanor, punishable by fines of up to \$1,150 and up to six months in jail.

In 2013, Delaware police made 2,632 arrests for petty marijuana possession, charged as an unclassified misdemeanor, including 298 charges involving juveniles, according to the Delaware Criminal Justice Council’s Statistical Analysis Center.

Keeley, who faces an opponent in November, said Thursday that if re-elected she intends to introduce a decriminalization bill when the General Assembly returns in January.

“The governor has said that he would not sign a legalization bill at this time,” Keeley said. “I would still like to continue the dialogue. Even just decriminalization is a step in the right direction.”

Lt. Gov. Matt Denn, the frontrunner to become Delaware’s next attorney general is also in the camp opposed to legalization.

Denn said while he supports removing criminal penalties for possession, he can’t get behind promoting use of the drug.

"I don't want our scarce criminal justice system resources being used to prosecute people for possession of small quantities of marijuana, but I do want my 9-year-old boys to understand that it is bad for them and they shouldn't use it," Denn said by email on Thursday.

Todd Kitchen, a marijuana user and legalization activist, said he is not surprised by broad support for legalization of the drug, despite the smaller steps being taken politically.

Kitchen helped push for the legalization of marijuana for medical purposes in 2011.

A 2005 car accident left Kitchen with traumatic brain injury, anxiety and severe back pain caused by a form of arthritis that he uses marijuana to soothe.

The state's first medical marijuana dispensary is scheduled to open early next year outside of Wilmington.

"A lot of people have been trying to change the attitude toward it and get out correct information to re-inform the public," said Kitchen, who says marijuana has a calming effect and leads to less violent behavior than alcohol.

The poll results, Kitchen said, shows "people are listening. They realize it's not as bad as they thought it was."

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M&T Bank Advertising Deceptive, Agency Says

By Maureen Milford

[Wilmington \(DE\) News Journal](#), October 16, 2014

At the same time M&T Bank of Buffalo deals with the fallout from its 2011 acquisition of Wilmington Trust Co., it has been hit with accusations of deceptive advertising from a checking account campaign.

The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau has taken action against the bank for luring customers with the promise of free checking accounts from 2009 to 2012 with advertisements such as "M&T Totally Free Checking No minimum Balance. No monthly service charge." The agency was established by the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act of 2010 to carry out federal consumer financial laws.

What the bank failed to disclose was that customers had to maintain a minimum level of deposits and withdrawals, according to the consent order. When consumers had no account activity for 90 days, the bank automatically converted the accounts to so-called M&T First accounts.

The M&T First accounts carried a monthly maintenance fee of \$5 to \$14 unless the average account balance was more than \$1,500 or if the consumer's combined balances of checking, savings and deposits was more than \$1,500, the order says. The only notification that the accounts had been switched was when "M&T First" appeared on account documents, according to the agency. According to the order, M&T converted approximately 80,903 free checking accounts to M&T First accounts, and approximately 59,041 customers were charged fees.

According to the order, M&T assessed approximately \$2.94 million in monthly maintenance fees on these converted accounts. It collected from approximately \$2.045 million of those fees from customers.

M&T has agreed to a consent order without admitting to the agency's findings. It has agreed to refund approximately \$2.045 million to affected customers and pay a \$200,000 civil penalty.

C. Michael Zabel, group vice president with M&T in Buffalo, said there is no impact on accounts acquired from the purchase of Wilmington Trust Co. in 2011 because M&T "did not advertise to them."

Darren J. King, M&T's executive vice president for retail and business banking, said more than two years ago, the consumer protection bureau changed the way certain rules and regulations were to be interpreted.

"And under that new interpretation, they indicated a concern about the way one of our checking products was marketed. We immediately changed our policies and procedures in response, and we have cooperated fully with their inquiry," King said. "The regulatory environment has evolved, and our policies and procedures have evolved as well, not just to meet the regulators' new expectations, but also to meet the highest expectations of our customers."

This latest action comes on the heels of a settlement reached last month with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission. Wilmington Trust reached an agreement to pay \$18.5 million to settle charges that it made false and misleading disclosures about its past-due loans over multiple quarters in 2009 and 2010.

Since 2013, Wilmington Trust has been embroiled in a criminal investigation by the U.S. Department of Justice that has led to six prosecutions. Three prosecutions involve former bank officials. In addition, shareholders have been pursuing a federal civil lawsuit against former Wilmington Trust directors and officers alleging they conspired to fraudulently conceal hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of past-due and non-performing loans.

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News Journal Keeping Needs Of Readers In Mind

By David Ledford

[Wilmington \(DE\) News Journal](#), October 16, 2014

We're reorganizing our news operation for the future – mindful that we've been privileged to serve Delaware daily since 1871 because our staff knows and cares about this state.

The realignment is necessary to meet the needs of more and more readers who consume news through digital channels. Delawareonline.com, easily the state's leading news web site, has enjoyed tremendous success, and we're restructuring our team to improve your experience on desktop, mobile and tablet.

In coming months we'll have more reporters working the state, and you'll see from them a greater sense of urgency. Their charge is to be more entrepreneurial in nature than in the past, depending as much on tips from readers as assignments from editors. So if you have an idea, or a slice of perspective you feel is missing from a story as initial reports roll onto delawareonline.com, please make your voice heard.

The News Journal stands on the bedrock of watchdog reporting, which we know from market surveys is the No. 1 priority of Delaware readers. I talk to readers almost every day and most recognize, as we do, that the success of our report is predicated on the quality of the ideas we pursue. Readers expect stories they can't get anywhere else, and they expect that work to be presented in innovative ways.

The two-day series we published last weekend, "Paladin Club Massacre," illustrates the way we'll present deep stories in the Newsroom of the Future.

It had a huge presence in Sunday and Monday editions of The News Journal and a magazine-like look at delawareonline.com's desktop, mobile and tablet platforms – with video, photographs and a graphic embedded among the chapters.

Before the work was posted online, reporter Cris Barrish alerted readers on Twitter and Facebook that it was coming. Once it was published, reader comments poured in.

So no matter how you consumed the content, our intent was to improve your experience.

That's the future. And we see our digital products getting more sophisticated.

We have a delawareonline.com app for the iPhone, an app for Android, an app for the iPad, and a brand new app for coverage of the Philadelphia Eagles.

If you're already a subscriber, you can also read our print edition online.

Speaking of subscribing, you can do so at delawareonline.com/subscribe.

The printed newspaper will continue to be delivered – and sold by vendors statewide –seven days a week. Yet as we restructure, you will notice better responsiveness to your ideas from reporters and editors. You'll get better community coverage. There's a new beat designed to chronicle solutions – the best ideas bubbling up from citizens and governments. There will be more energy on stories that have statewide impact and new focus on the creative ideas coursing through Delaware.

The professionals on our staff are looking at a range of new opportunities in our organization to help bring you this kind of journalism. To effect this change we have streamlined management and consolidated some production jobs. But we are breathing new life into the reporting ranks, ensuring that we continue to have far more boots on the ground than any other news organization statewide.

Again, our strength is our people – journalists who know and care deeply about Delaware.

Thank you, Delaware, for the trust you've placed in us the past 143 years. We view it as a privilege to continue daily delivering the news in a place we love.

David Ledford

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Delaware Colleges To Waive Application Fees

By Matthew Albright

[Wilmington \(DE\) News Journal](#), October 16, 2014

Delaware's colleges will waive application fees for in-state students who apply during the state's College Application Month, which started this week and runs through Nov. 21.

Delaware Tech and Wilmington University have waived fees for students participating in the program for two years. They will be joined this year by the University of Delaware and Delaware State University, Gov. Jack Markell's office announced Thursday.

"I applaud our universities for working to make their admissions process as accessible and encouraging to our students as possible," Markell said in a statement. "With good jobs increasingly requiring education or training beyond high school, addressing obstacles to a college application is vital."

Students can apply to Wesley College and Goldey-Beacom College without charge, which means no Delaware senior will owe application fees to the state's six colleges and universities, Markell's office said.

This year, every high school in the state is participating in College Application Month, which allows students to apply for colleges during the school day.

State officials say the fee waivers are important because they often discourage students from low-income families from applying, even if those students have the potential to succeed once they enroll.

Students applying to UD should be sure to select "Yes, I participated in the UD Senior Search Program." Students applying to Delaware state should select "request a fee waiver" on the "submit and pay" screen."

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No Polar Vortex In NOAA Winter Forecast

By Jeff Montgomery

[Wilmington \(DE\) News Journal](#), October 16, 2014

Most of the nation is unlikely to see a repeat this winter of the polar vortex invasions that made for icy headaches through late 2013 and early this year, the nation's climate forecasters said Thursday.

"Last year we saw a very recurrent pattern with very persistent cold air outbreaks. At this point there's nothing that indicates we'll see a repeat of that," said Mike Halpert, acting director of the Climate Prediction Center in the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

"The likelihood that we'll see it as persistent as we saw it last year is fairly low," Halpert said.

Although some forecasting agencies have pointed to signs of a colder-than-average year, the Mid-Atlantic and east-central part of the country have an even chance of the season being colder or warmer than usual.

Much of California, meanwhile, faces continuation of an ongoing and historic drought, with dry conditions continuing into spring.

That contrasts with moderate expectations with above-average rainfall across the south and along the entire East Coast.

State College-based Accuweather recently predicted a colder-than-average winter and possibly more snow or rain than usual, an outlook partly related to expectations that water temperatures in the equatorial Pacific will warm and set up moderate El Niño conditions.

NOAA officials said Thursday that conditions are "flirting" with an El Niño, with only a weak pattern likely.

El Niño's effect on the Northeast's climate remains uncertain, however.

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Plan For New Delaware Container Port Could Create 4,000 Jobs

By Maureen Milford

[Wilmington \(DE\) News Journal](#), October 16, 2014

An effort to expand the Port of Wilmington to a 176-acre site on the Delaware River in New Castle will move forward Friday with a public forum expected to reveal preliminary findings of a \$100,000 feasibility study.

Based on a draft of the study obtained by The News Journal, the proposed \$400 million to \$500 million development being pushed by the International Longshoremen's Association would be a viable option for keeping the port competitive for the next 50 years or more.

The study for the longshoremen by maritime advisory company Paul F. Richardson Associates Inc., says a privately financed port development in Riveredge Industrial Park just south of the Delaware Memorial Bridge would allow Delaware to compete for cargo with regional ports in New York/New Jersey, Baltimore and Norfolk, Va., and has the potential to create "vast employment opportunities."

"This project is critical to creating good-paying blue-collar jobs that will help restore the middle class in Delaware," said Ronald "Kimoko" Harris, business agent with International Longshoremen's Association Clerks and Checkers Local 1883, whose members work to load and unload cargo.

Harris estimates the project could create 4,000 new high-paying jobs. Longshoremen are among the highest-paid blue collar workers in the country, with some earning more than \$100,000 a year.

The event to be held at the Sheraton Suites Wilmington Downtown Hotel will detail the mechanics of a development, according to Ed Zimny, a principal in Richardson Associates Inc., of Holmdel, N.J.

New Castle County Executive Tom Gordon, who has championed the project since returning to office, will also attend the 10 a.m. forum.

"It's a necessary project for Delaware to succeed and grow the middle class and reduce crime in Wilmington by giving people an opportunity to have livable wages," Gordon said.

The presentation will include a question and answer session designed to involve environmental groups, neighbors, labor and public officials. Information gathered from these "stakeholders" will be incorporated into a final report that is expected to be released in November or December.

An expanded port has been a vision of the longshoremen's locals 1883 and 1694 for about eight years. The longshoremen have been concerned about the transformation of the shipping industry with the advent of a new global fleet of mega-ships that can carry almost double the containers of the previous generation of ships. The larger ships require larger, more modern terminals.

These mega-vessels have a capacity of 7,500 to 12,000 container units as measured by the standard 20-foot container (TEU). By the end of 2016, there will be more than 770 container ships of over 7,500 TEU, compared to 628 ships today, according to HJ Tan of Alphaliner, a shipping research company in Singapore.

To handle these large cargo ships, port terminals need huge ship-to-shore gantry cranes on foundations able to support the heavier loads, Zimny said.

The existing Port of Wilmington doesn't handle vessels with a capacity much larger than 3,000 TEU, Zimny said.

The concept for Riveredge calls for a single large pier, or dock, at Riveredge with seven or more berths for ships, Harris said. With six or more large container cranes, the port could work on the larger container ships. According to Harris, container work is the highest-paying cargo for longshoremen.

The site, which has been owned by Parkway Gravel for 20 years, has enough space to accommodate warehouses. The Gordon administration also envisions capitalizing on the existing rail line near the properties to tie the Riveredge operation with the Port of Wilmington and the former General Motors assembly plant on Boxwood Road near Newport.

The Boxwood location, the former Fisker Automotive site that the county has offered to buy, would serve as a central location for the distribution to retailers of goods and products by rail or highway.

Access to I-295 is right outside Riveredge Industrial Park. The plan calls for the rail line that runs through Riveredge to be connected to the Port of Wilmington. The rail system at the Port of Wilmington connects to the Boxwood Road plant, connecting all three sites by rail.

The concept envisions a public-private partnership that would likely have a long-term arrangement between a public port authority and a private company. The private company would develop and operate the port for 30 years or more, the draft of the study says.

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176: Number of acres a new port would cover.

\$400 million: Estimated cost of the project.

4,000: Estimated jobs the port would create.

7: Number of ship berths handling biggest container ships.

Strine Appoints Panel To Review Court System

By Sean O'Sullivan

[Wilmington \(DE\) News Journal](#), October 16, 2014

WILMINGTON – Following through on his State of the Judiciary address in June, Delaware Supreme Court Chief Justice Leo Strine Wednesday released a 12-page administrative directive that aims to review, and potentially reshape and downsize significantly, parts of the state's court system.

In short, the directive calls for the creation of a new panel to review the effectiveness and efficiency of the "specialty" or "problem-solving courts" and if the courts "warrant continuation."

The panel, which is made up of judges and is supposed to report back by June, also has been charged with identifying means "to consolidate, eliminate or revise the mandate" of more than a dozen criminal justice policy organizations like Sentencing Accountability Commission, the Criminal Justice Council and the Criminal Justice Reinvestment Oversight Group.

The directive notes, as Strine did in June, that some of these groups have overlapping or inconsistent mandates.

Strine said this effort is "a positive thing." And while supporters of the specialty courts – that include drug court, mental health court and the veterans' court – were concerned by Strine's comments in June, he said that was like people who get an "A-" and focus on the minus.

The specialty courts often give defendants who meet certain criteria a chance to resolve their charges pre-trial – and avoid conviction – if they agree to therapy or treatment.

Strine said he supports the idea of these courts "but what we are talking about is using taxpayers' resources and the resources of our partners (like Probation and Parole) more efficiently."

The chief judge said the goal of the review is not to eliminate the courts but to evaluate, modernize, streamline and ultimately better codify them so they become more a matter of "law not lore" and ensure that the gut feelings of people who support such courts are backed up with data.

Right now some of the specialty courts operate differently in different counties. The drug court, for example, is overseen by a court commissioner in Sussex County but it is overseen by a judge in New Castle and Kent counties. The Strine directive calls for the panel to "develop statewide standards, rules of procedure and outcome measures to govern their operation and measure their performance."

Strine added that the specialty courts should perhaps operate in a more cooperative way. A defendant in drug court may also be a veteran. A person with mental health issues may also have substance abuse issues. And some people in veterans' court may have both drug and mental illness issues.

Strine acknowledges that it is somewhat ironic that in order to pare down what he sees as overlapping and inconsistent functions he has created a new committee – The Criminal Justice Council of the Judiciary, made up of 15 state court judges – but he sees the committee as a necessary vehicle to get the job done.

New Castle County Superior Court Judge William C. Carpenter Jr. will head this new review committee along with Superior Court Judge Jan R. Jurden, who spearheaded creation of the mental health court and served on the veterans court in New Castle County. Superior Court Judge William L. Witham Jr., who founded the veterans court in Delaware, is also on the committee.

Strine said he hopes the end result of the process – hard data about the effectiveness of programs and specialty courts – also will help the court system make more persuasive arguments when the court goes to the legislature to seek additional funding.

At the same time, Strine made it clear he expects to find cost savings through the review process.

One issue, however, may be that some of the policy committees that Strine is looking to consolidate may have been established by the legislature, governor or federal mandates.

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White House Official Visits, Lauds Prestige Academy

By Matthew Albright

[Wilmington \(DE\) News Journal](#), October 16, 2014

David Johns stood in the middle of the cafeteria at Prestige Academy Charter School in Wilmington and had the students repeat after him.

"I am brilliant. I am beautiful," they shouted. "I am resilient. I can be anything I choose to."

There are few more places Johns, executive director of the White House Initiative on Education Excellence for African Americans, could have visited. He is crossing the country spreading the word about My Brother's Keeper, President Barack Obama's effort to improve education and workforce training for young black men.

Prestige is Delaware's only public all-boys school, serving almost entirely low-income minority students.

"This is the only school in the state that is unapologetically and intentionally focusing on young men of color," Johns said.

Delaware's black students, like the rest of the country, face more than their share of educational problems.

Even as the state brought its dropout rate to a 30-year low last year, black students still faced a 4 percent annual dropout rate, almost twice that of white students.

Only 59 percent of black students scored "proficient" in reading on the state's standardized test last year, compared to 82 percent of white students, and only 54 percent scored proficient in math, compared to 84 percent of white students.

The problems are especially acute for black male students, who are much more likely to be shooting victims and face prison time and other social problems that derail their potential.

Started in January, My Brother's Keeper is the Obama administration's call to find models around the country for ways to break this cycle for young black men. The program calls for community members to step up as mentors and advocate for those students.

"I know you guys encounter things on the way to school that would cause even some adults to say 'I quit,'" Johns told the students. "But if you hear me say nothing else, hear me say I'm proud of you. And we as a country need to do a better job supporting you."

Johns took questions from the students and teachers, which ranged from what it was like to work in the White House to what the administration was doing to lower the number of black teens shot and killed by police officers.

Jack Perry, the school's executive director, encouraged students to ask Johns tough questions and give him their honest opinions.

"No other young men can speak about your situation better than you can," he said.

Johns visited Wilmington on his way to a national educational summit in Philadelphia. He came at the request of City Councilman Darius Brown, whose son attends Prestige.

"We are making great strides toward equitable urban education," Brown said. "But there is more we need to do before we have truly great learning neighborhoods."

Johns praised the students for their sharp attire.

"Next time the president needs help with his tie, I know who to send him to," he said.

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Coming Soon: Low-digit Surf Fishing Tags

By Jeff Montgomery

[Wilmington \(DE\) News Journal](#), October 16, 2014

For the surf-caster with everything but a trophy catch, Delaware's surf-fishing program soon will offer some bragging rights consolation: Trophy Tags.

Gov. Jack Markell signed legislation Thursday authorizing the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control to sell or auction 1,000 low-digit plates for surf-fishing vehicles.

State officials said the affinity plate sales – inspired by longstanding interest in low-digit auto tags – will raise money for Division of Parks and Recreation operations and maintenance, especially at ocean parks. The state park system discontinued sale of numbered tags in 1994, but collectors and fishing enthusiasts have shown continuing interest.

"This legislation has the potential to be a strong revenue source to benefit our state parks," Gov. Jack Markell said in written remarks.

"This year, more than 14,000 surf tags were sold, generating about \$1.3 million for our state parks. So not only is this legislation a revenue-raiser for our parks, it appeals to parks users who have an affinity for low digit tags – and we in Delaware know that will appeal to a large number of potential buyers."

Delaware's low-digit tag culture peaked in 2008, when motor vehicle tag No. 6 sold for an astonishing \$675,000 at auction.

Under the surf fishing tag program – expected to begin by Memorial Day 2015 – state parks officials will conduct a live, annual auction during the spring or early summer for a limited number of tags. An online auction will follow allowing bids on up to 100 tags at a time. Non-numbered tags will continue to be available, however.

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Wilmington Defines Possible Development District

By Yann Ranaivo

[Wilmington \(DE\) News Journal](#), October 16, 2014

Wilmington officials want a 223-acre area that spans parts of downtown and nearby neighborhoods on the west and east sides to receive a state designation expected to spur revitalization of urban blocks.

The city's application for the state's new Downtown Development District initiative shows that city leaders are targeting significant redevelopment in an area that is roughly bounded by Locust, 11th, Fourth and Adams streets. The southernmost part of the district includes a small area that juts out between Shipley, King and Second streets.

Wilmington has until Nov. 1 to submit its application to the state, but City Council on Thursday voted 11-0 for a resolution backing the plan.

"I think it's appropriate," Council President Theo Gregory said. "I think it was inclusive."

Planning and development Director Leonard Sophrin said the proposed area was drawn with the idea of improving pedestrian traffic among downtown and the adjacent neighborhoods. Projects in the district, which could be residential, commercial or mixed use, would keep people in the city after the typical 5 p.m. work day.

"We are looking to bring the neighborhood and downtown life together. They had to be connected," Sophrin said. "We are rebuilding the relationship between neighborhoods and downtown itself."

The state's budget this year includes \$7 million to revitalize downtown areas. The state will select one community in each county for the initial designations.

The designation allows projects in the Downtown Development Districts to become eligible for some state reimbursements and a variety of local incentive packages.

Sophrin said the incentives and reimbursements could create cost savings that allow developers to take on more projects, whether they be in the district itself or elsewhere in the city.

"This is a pilot in many ways," he said.

Gregory said he likes the proposed designated area because it is comprised of blocks that are socioeconomically and ethnically diverse.

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WILMINGTON JOURNAL NEWS EDITORIALS

Goals Should Be To Improve Courts

[Wilmington \(DE\) News Journal](#), October 16, 2014

Delaware Supreme Court Chief Justice Leo E. Strine Jr. clearly telegraphed his intentions, but his action Thursday took a number of court observers by surprise.

Chief Justice Strine issued an order to create a panel that would take a close look at what are called "problem-solving courts." These include drug, mental health, re-entry and veterans courts. They are designed to do what the unofficial name implies – to solve problems rather than to dispense harsh justice. He foreshadowed the move in his state of the judiciary address earlier this year.

The chief justice wants his special "Criminal Justice Council of the Judiciary" to examine the effectiveness of these courts and to develop rules of procedures, as well as consistent standards. He also wants the council to help determine which of these courts "warrant continuation." That means the panel should decide which specialty court should be kept open and which should be closed. This last idea sent shudders down the spines of some supporters of the courts.

However, we should take the chief justice at his word and support the council's examination of the courts. Several of these courts have won public recognition for keeping minor offenders out of jail and for steering drug users, for example, to rehabilitation. It does not make sense to put people who are mostly wrecking their own lives in prison when they could be steered to other paths.

It would be good to know how effective the courts are, whether they are actually doing what they were intended to do and whether they are operating efficiently. For example, as the chief justice pointed out in his directive, an offender could end up in both drug and veterans courts. Chief Justice Strine asked

whether it would be better to make sure only one court handles the case. The chief justice, in his directive, said the goal is “identify which of the so-called ‘problem-solving courts’ have demonstrated sufficient utility in terms of public safety, the rehabilitation of offenders and the efficient of the judicial system to warrant continuation.”

We believe that “problem-solving courts” make sense. However, they have developed rapidly over the past two decades and now exist in every state. The forms they take and the outcomes they bring about vary widely. Standards may sound like an innovation-squelching idea, but this is a justice system we are talking about. Much is at risk, not only for society, but also for the offenders in court.

Legal experts around the country have begun to question these very things. Critics have called it a “custom justice” system.

Chief Justice Strine’s examining committee could put those questions and criticisms to rest.

We believe that the Delaware “problem-solving courts” actually have solved problems and kept people out of jail. The job should be to make them more effective.

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