

**How the Future Applies to Health Care, Policy & the Economy**

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**Objectives**

1. Election Impact
2. Lame Duck Session and Legislative Priorities
3. Looking Ahead: 2013
4. Making a Difference: What you can do to impact decisions in Washington D.C.

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**Election 2012 Recap**

**The White House**  
538 Electoral Votes

	332	206	
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**Senate**  
50 Balance of Power

	53	2	45	
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**House of Representatives**  
218 Balance of Power

	195	7	233	
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**Congressional Calendar: Dates to Watch**

**Congressional Calendar: "Lame Duck" Session:**  
Two weeks of November (Week of the 13<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>)

- Week of November 12:**
  - Post-election session of 112th Congress convenes. Winners of special elections in Kentucky's 4th District, Michigan's 11th, New Jersey's 10th and Washington's 1st will be sworn in for the conclusion of the 112th. Orientation sessions begin for incoming senators and representatives.
  - Senate Democratic, Senate Republican and House Republican leadership elections.

Week of November 20<sup>th</sup>: House and Senate in recess for Thanksgiving

Two weeks of December (Week of 3<sup>rd</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>)

- Week of December 5<sup>th</sup>:** Anticipated House Democratic Leadership Elections

The last vote for 2012 and the 112<sup>th</sup> Congress is expected on Friday, December 14<sup>th</sup>\*  
\*Given the nature of legislative items remaining, adjournment could very well be pushed back

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**Congressional Calendar: Dates to Watch**

**Congressional Calendar: 2013 Outlook**

**January 1:** Federal income tax rates are scheduled to increase, reverting to pre-2001 levels. The most recent "patch" to the alternative minimum tax is scheduled to expire, as is the 2 percent payroll tax reduction.

**January 2:** Spending reductions mandated by the Budget Control Act, collectively known as sequestration, are scheduled to take effect.

**January 3:** The 113th Congress convenes.

**Late January:** Inauguration and the President's annual State of the Union address to Congress.

**February 4:** By statute, the president is required to submit his annual budget proposal to Congress by the first Monday in February.

**Mid-February:** The federal government is expected to reach the limit of its borrowing authority, necessitating congressional approval for increasing the debt limit.

**March 27:** The current continuing appropriations law expires.

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**Lame Duck Session: Legislative Priorities**

Leadership expects this "lame duck" session to be very busy as they tackle the outstanding fiscal issues for 2012.

**Key Lame Duck Issues Include:**

- Doc Fix
- Sequestration
- Tax Cuts (Bush Tax Cuts)
- Alternative Minimum Tax (AMT)
- Fiscal Cliff

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**Lame Duck Session: Legislative Priorities**

Remaining Legislative Items for Lame Duck Session:

The following are a few of the key topics that will likely be addressed in Congress during the lame duck session:

1. **Budget:**
  - Continuing Resolution at current levels through March 2013
  - Avoids shutdown showdown in 2012
  - Yet Budget talks continue with the Gang of Eight
2. **Doc Fix:**
  - In February, Congress extended the current temporary doc fix through Dec. 31.
  - MedPAC estimated that without fixes to the SGR formula, practices could expect a 27.5% decrease to the physician fee schedule's conversion factor, according to the report.

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**Lame Duck Session: Legislative Priorities**

3. **Sequestration:**
  - Sequestration is a package of automatic cuts - triggered by the Budget Control Act of 2011
  - Effective January 2, 2013: Across the board cuts of \$984 billion over 10 years, or \$109 billion annually
  - Cuts equally divided between defense and non-defense
    - o Non-defense discretionary: \$322 billion (8%)
    - o \*Cuts in Research, health professions training, ACA etc.
    - o Defense discretionary: \$492 billion (12%)
    - o Medicare: \$123 billion (capped at 2%)
    - o Other mandatory \$47 billion
  - Social Security, Medicaid, and low-income support programs exempt

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**Lame Duck Session: Legislative Priorities**

3. **Sequestration (continued):**

**Sequestration impact on Nursing Workforce Development Programs:**

  - 4,129 fewer nurses and nursing students supported through all of the Title VIII Nursing Workforce Development programs.
  - 1,011 fewer participants in the Title VIII Advanced Education Nursing and Nurse Anesthetist Traineeship programs, which would impact access to primary and acute care provided by advanced practice registered nurses.
  - 978 fewer nurses, nursing students, faculty, and other health professionals who are supported by the Title VIII Comprehensive Geriatric Education program and deliver care to the elderly, disabled, and chronically ill.
  - 872 fewer underrepresented and disadvantaged nursing students supported through the Title VIII Nursing Workforce Diversity Program.
  - 487 fewer K-12 students supported through the Title VIII Nursing Workforce Diversity Program, which recruits underrepresented minorities to the nursing profession.
  - 645 fewer training opportunities for nurses pursuing graduate-level education through the Title VIII Advanced Nursing Education program.

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**Lame Duck Session: Legislative Priorities**

**4. Tax Cuts:**

- The Bush tax cuts, which decreased rates at all income levels, are set to expire Dec. 31.
- Obama and other Democrats want to extend them for income under \$250,000 a year maintaining the low rates for about 97 percent of taxpayers.
- Republicans want to extend them in their entirety.

**5. Alternative Minimum Tax:**

- The AMT, a levy intended to ensure high-income individuals pay some minimum taxes, must be adjusted for inflation or it will hit an additional 27 million people
- In 2011 the exemption amount was \$74,450 for married taxpayers (\$48,450 single). Unless Congress acts, the exemption amount will fall to \$45,000 (\$33,750 single).

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**Lame Duck Session: Legislative Priorities**



A cartoon illustration showing a car with "FORWARD" written on its side driving off a cliff. A sign at the edge of the cliff says "FISCAL CLIFF". The car is carrying a man and a woman. The text "MEANWHILE AROUND THE VICTORY LAP" is in the top left corner. The artist's signature "Nash 11/20/12" is in the bottom right corner.

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**Lame Duck Session: Legislative Priorities**

**FISCAL CLIFF?**

- If many of the previous items go unaddressed, we would go over the fiscal cliff.
- The fiscal cliff is the inside-the-beltway name for the combination of the expiring Bush-era tax cuts and the large spending cuts that are scheduled to begin in January (sequestration).
- To do so would result in about \$720 billion in cuts in 2013, and it would bring down the deficit that year in some of major ways, including:
  - o \$180 billion from income tax hikes
  - o \$120 billion in revenue from the payroll tax
  - o \$110 billion from the sequesters' automatic spending cuts, and
  - o \$160 billion from expiring tax breaks and other programs

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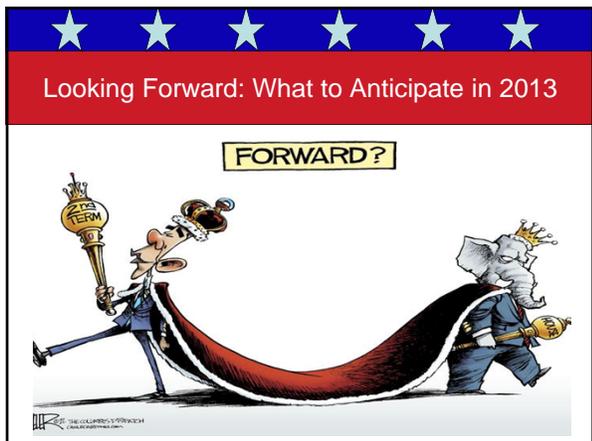
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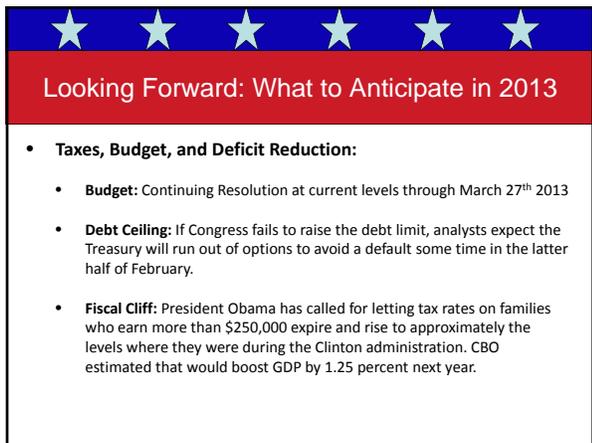
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**Making a Difference**

According to the Congressional Management Foundation survey on communicating with Congress, if a Member has not already arrived at a position on an issue. Offices rated how much influence the following advocacy strategies directed at their Washington Office have on his/her decision:

- 97% of Hill offices in-person visits from constituents**
- 90% individualized postal letters**
- 88% Individualized emails**

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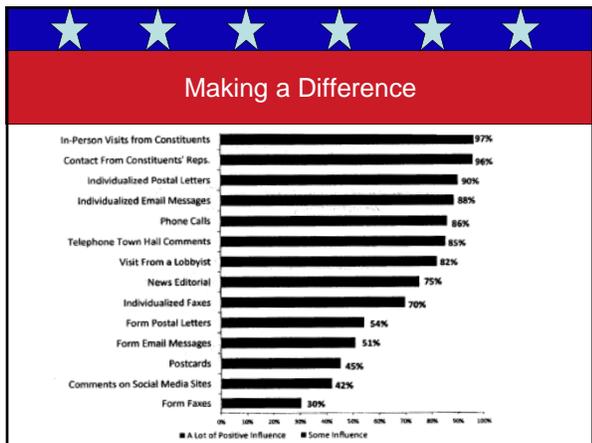
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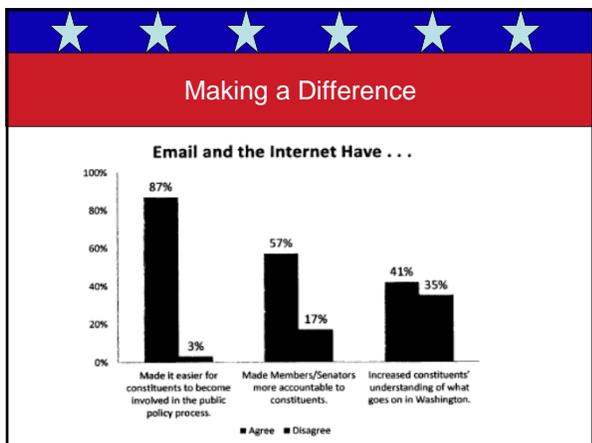
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Making a Difference

**How to Make a Difference:**

- Stay in touch with your elected officials and their staff
- You are the expert. Let your knowledge and real life expertise be known to the staff. They will appreciate your input and your relatable story is easily passed on to the Member of Congress
- Keep updated on current legislative activity, as it will change quickly during the lame duck and 113<sup>th</sup> Congress

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