



THINK SHARP

Keystone vs. climate change

Would blocking the Keystone XL pipeline have any practical effect on curbing global warming? Joe Nocera and Bill McKibben square off. **4P**

TALKING POINTS

"I think you will regret staking out that claim." — *Email from White House economic adviser Gene Sperling to The Washington Post's Bob Woodward, challenging his depiction of President Barack Obama's role in budget sequestration (Politico, Thursday)*

"This is a robbery. Give me all of your money, especially the 100s. And give me the envelope back." — *A note that confessed bank robber Stacey Dewayne Hargraves slipped to a teller at the Bank of Texas in Oak Cliff on Jan. 16 (Dallas Morning News Crime Blog, Thursday)*

"Et maintenant je parle en anglais, parce qu'autrement on ne me laisse pas rentrer chez moi." — *Secretary of State John Kerry, cracking a joke to journalists in Paris at the end of a statement displaying his French language skills; translation: "And now I'll speak in English, because otherwise they won't let me return home" (Yahoo News, Wednesday)*

"There were moments, as there were throughout the history of the church, when the seas were rough and the wind blew against us and it seemed that the Lord was sleeping." — *Pope Benedict XVI, on trying times in his papacy, in his final address to a packed St. Peter's Square (BBC, Wednesday)*



"When you're out that far and the Earth is a tiny, blue pinpoint, you're going to need someone you can hug." — *Space-travel entrepreneur Dennis Tito, announcing a search for a married couple to take a no-frills, 500-day fly-by of Mars in 2018 (SPACE.com, Wednesday)*

"One of the benefits of global warming is there hasn't been as many icebergs in the North Atlantic these days." — *Australian billionaire Clive Palmer, announcing he is building a replica of the original Titanic, and assessing the dangers it would face (The Associated Press, Wednesday)*

"If we were 0-5 after March 31, I'll have some heart attacks or something." — *Texas Rangers manager Ron Washington, downplaying a spring training winless streak (Fort Worth Star-Telegram, Wednesday)*

"It is not worth all this to lie to you, and I did not do it." — *Dallas City Manager Mary Suhm, peppered with questions from the City Council on her handling of a controversial gas-drilling lease (City Hall Blog, Wednesday)*

"I distrust you. I think this is dishonest." — *Dallas City Council member Angela Hunt, to Suhm (The Dallas Morning News, Thursday)*

"Miss Suhm, this is a Good Friday moment, but I guarantee you from the faith well into which I reach, your Easter is coming, and you will sail forth." — *City Council member Vonciel Jones Hill, offering Suhm moral support (Unfair Park blog, Wednesday)*

"Whenever a society adopts racial entitlements, it is very difficult to get out of them through the normal political processes." — *Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia, during oral arguments on the Voting Rights Act (The New Yorker, Thursday)*

"If more men were homosexual, there would be no wars, because homosexual men would never kill other men." — *Indie singing star Morrissey, to rookiemag.com, an online publication for teen girls (The Independent, Wednesday)*

"When I see someone swerve, I no longer think, 'Hey, look at that drunk guy.' I think, 'He's texting.'" — *State Rep. Eddie Lucio III, D-Harlingen, in a House hearing on a bill to outlaw texting while driving (Texas Tribune, Tuesday)*



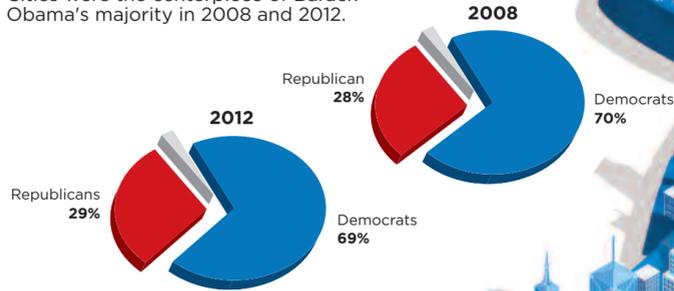
"The key to dissuading drivers from texting while driving is information and education, not government micromanagement." — *Statement from the office of Gov. Rick Perry (Austin American-Statesman)*

"How am I supposed to go about reporting something when the person I'm supposed to report to is the person who raped me?" — *Former Airman Virginia Messick, the first victim to speak publicly about a sex assault scandal at Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio (The New York Times, Wednesday)*

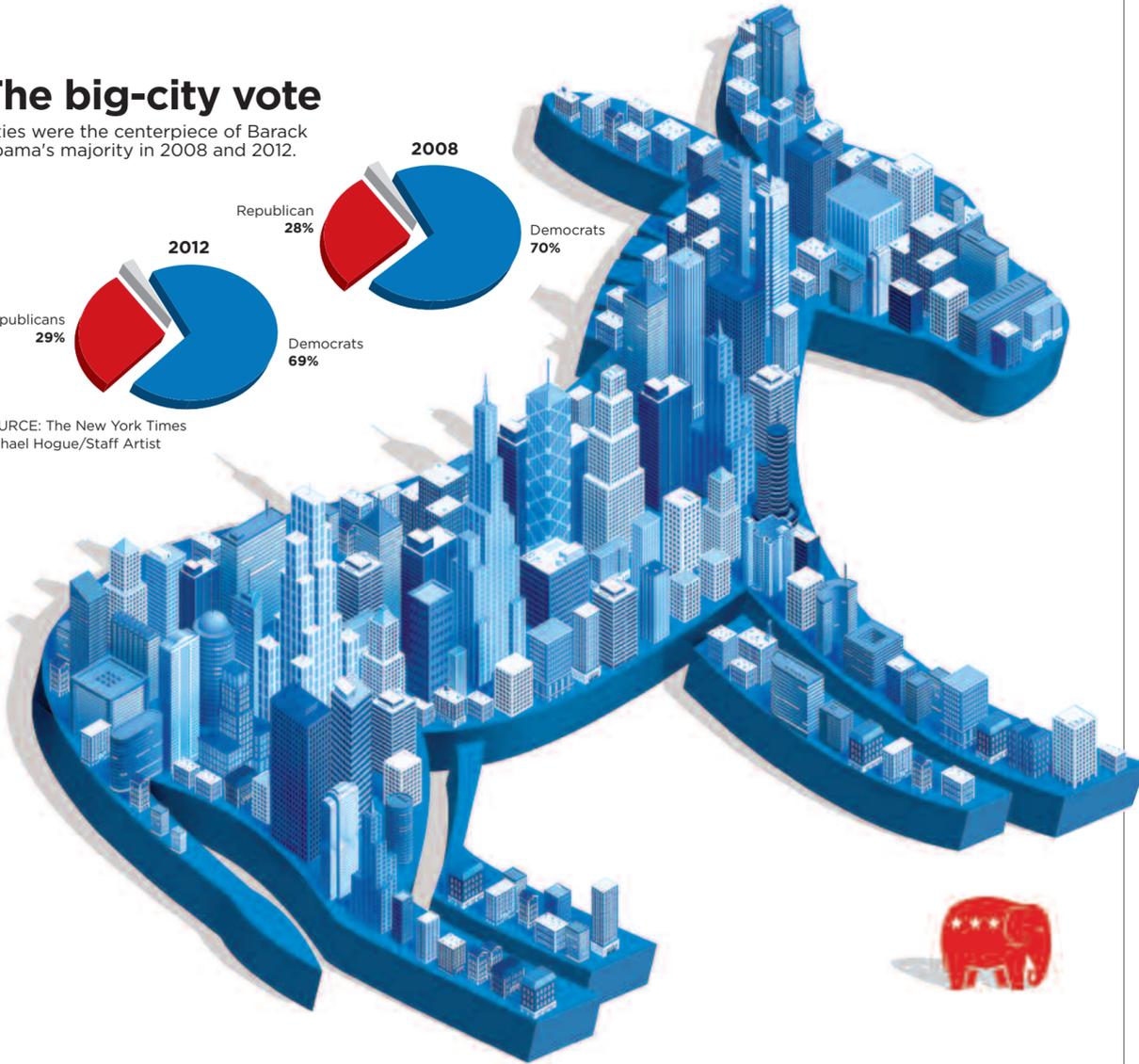
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The big-city vote

Cities were the centerpiece of Barack Obama's majority in 2008 and 2012.



SOURCE: The New York Times
Michael Hogue/Staff Artist



The elephant not in the room

GOP has given up on city votes, says **Edward Glaeser**; winning them back would benefit all

After the presidential election in November, *New York Times* exit polls found that Republican candidate Mitt Romney had received just 29 percent of the big-city vote to President Barack Obama's 69 percent. That gap prompted Paul Ryan, Romney's running mate, to conclude that it was "the turnout especially in urban areas" that "gave President Obama the big margin to win this race." Ryan was right: The GOP has an urban problem. And it's partly a self-created one. The party, nationally and even locally, has focused on winning suburban and rural votes, and has stopped reaching out to city dwellers.

The cities-as-foreign-territory approach is bad politics for the Republicans. After all, successful cities like New York and Houston surge with ambitious strivers and entrepreneurs, who should instinctively sympathize with the GOP's faith in private industry. The Republican move away from the cities is also bad for the cities themselves, which have hugely benefited — and could benefit a lot more — from right-of-center ideas.

The GOP wasn't always so dismissive of cities. Almost at the front of its 1968 platform was a section called "Crisis of the Cities," which declared that "for today and tomorrow, there must be — and we pledge — a vigorous effort, nationwide, to transform the blighted areas of cities." The platform advocated "greater involvement of vast private enterprise resources in the improvement of urban life, induced by tax and other incentives" as well as "new technological and administrative approaches through flexible federal programs enabling and encouraging communities to solve their own problems." After Richard Nixon won the election that year, he sought to deliver on those promises. Aided by his HUD secretary, George Romney (Mitt's father), he moved federal policy away from subsidizing disastrous public housing projects and toward a system of housing vouchers. Nixon also championed block grants, which gave cities flexibility in distributing federal aid, allowing them to target their greatest needs.

The 2012 party platform, by contrast, had no city-oriented policies whatsoever and used the word *urban* just twice — once to decry the current

administration's allegedly "replacing civil engineering with social engineering as it pursues an exclusively urban vision of dense housing and government transit." (The Obama administration's urban policy has actually been rather timid. It has done little to reduce one of the federal government's largest social-engineering efforts, one that favors suburbs over cities: promoting homeownership with the mortgage-interest tax deduction and with subsidized mortgages from Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac. That policy amounts to bribing people to leave rented urban apartments and buy suburban houses.)

Cities have suffered from the GOP's departure. For one thing, any group or place benefits from being the object of political competition. Swing groups in swing states, such as Cubans in Miami and autoworkers in Ohio, receive political attention and favors, while solidly Republican or Democratic constituencies get taken for granted. The Obama administration surely did less for cities than it would have if it had feared losing urban votes.

But handouts and other pandering are far less valuable than the other asset that Republican-abandoned cities have lost: the particularly Republican perspective, with its focus on economic freedom, competition, and law and order. That perspective formulated some of the most successful policies in memory for making cities better places to live. Without it, the urban success stories of recent years could wither.

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BRIDGING DALLAS' NORTH-SOUTH GAP

Loyalty to Democrats is getting southern residents nothing and nowhere, **Tod Robberson** says, so why not shake things up?

Look at any place in the world ruled by a one-party system, and you're likely to find political representation skewed to favor elites, uneven social development and very high rates of poverty among large segments of the population. Look at PRI-controlled Mexico before 2000, Saddam Hussein's Iraq or China. Or if you want a more local example, look at southern Dallas.

When there's no effective competition among candidates and parties, people in power feel no pressing need to perform or go out of their way to serve the people who put them there. Checks and balances disappear. A lack of competition encourages corruption and lazy representation. It also tends to promote unqualified politicians to offices unsuited to their abilities. The risk is high that they'll do more damage than good.

The lack of healthy political competition south of the Trinity and Interstate 30 is a big reason the southern half of Dallas lags far behind its northern counterpart. Southern Dallas voters don't elect representatives; they elect dynasties.

Eddie Bernice Johnson has represented Texas' 30th Congressional District since its creation in 1993. At 77, she shows no sign of stepping aside so a younger, more energetic politician can seek the position. She vacated her state Senate seat in 1993 to go to Washington. In her place came Royce West, who also has represented District 23 ever since.

John Wiley Price has held his county commissioner's seat since 1985. In spite of an ongoing

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