



# CALPEEK

CALIFORNIA POLITICAL WEEK

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## PRESIDENT OBAMA HAS HIS “MOJO” BACK IN A VERY GOOD STATE OF THE UNION SPEECH

Editor's Note: It was President Barack Obama's 6<sup>th</sup> State of the Union speech and *Calpeek.com* thought it was one of Obama's best. It was his shortest. Here's our commentary and analysis...

...The “mojo” line came from Demo U.S. Sen. Charles Schumer of New York. CNN's Wolf Blitzer said the President's SOTU presentation was “supremely confident.” *Calpeek.com* publisher Dick Rosengarten thought the speech hit all the key issues that President Obama wanted to make. Viewers learned a new term: *Middle Class Economics*...

...The GOPers were correct in saying the SOTU speech was too partisan. But that's to be expected. There were five Republican responses: U.S. Sen. Joni Ernst of Iowa (main response). She was appealing, but did not say anything new; U.S. Sen. Ted Cruz; U.S. Mike Lee (Tea Party); and U.S.Sen. Rand Paul. House Speaker John Boehner sat in his chair **stone faced** for most of the Obama SOTU address...

...The progressive Demos in the House loved the SOTU speech **except** for President Obama's request for a fast-track on a new Asian-Pacific free trade agreement. Demos still have a sour taste after the Congress passed the NAFTA Agreement in 1994 on President Bill Clinton's watch. Many jobs were shipped overseas after NAFTA was approved. President Obama is going to need GOP assistance...

...CNN/ORC did a poll immediately after the SOTU speech with 420 adult Americans who watched the address. 20% of those questioned were GOPers, 39% were Demos and 41% said they were independents...

...The first question asked was if the President's policies will move the nation in the **right or wrong direction?** Right direction 72% vs. 24% wrong direction and 4% no opinion. On policy issues being proposed by President Obama here are the results: **The Economy:** 71% right; 25% wrong and no opinion 4%. **Immigration:** 60%

right; 35% wrong; and 5% no opinion. **Taxes:** 64% right; 31% wrong; and 5% no opinion. **Race Relations:** 74% right; 18% wrong; and 8% no opinion. And **Terrorism:** 69% right; 24% wrong; and 7% no opinion..

...President Obama got a good reception when he asked for a congressional resolution for the war on terrorism, especially ISIS. Unilateral action if necessary. Cuba not so much. “When something is wrong for 50 years, it's time for a change.” In addition to national security, President Obama made a big pitch for a new and strong cyber security law. There is congressional unity on this issue...

...President Obama's bottom line in the SOTU speech: **“The State of the Union is strong.”** Eleven million new jobs, gasoline prices way down, the U.S. energy industry is #1; the DOW is way up, and more people have health insurance.” However, President Obama said more needs to be done for the middle class . He's looking to tax the 1%. That is not going to happen...

...The president also had a list of bills he will **veto** if he doesn't agree with them: the Wall Street Reforms; Affordable Care Act; immigration; and more Iran sanctions....

...President Obama's best one-liner: “I have no more races to run. (Republicans cheered) because I won both elections.” (Democrats cheered louder). Stay tuned...

## CAMPAIGN 2015: GOVERNOR CALLS SPECIAL ELECTION FOR 7TH SD, 21ST SD AND 37TH SD.

Editor's Note: Three special elections will be conducted on **March 17<sup>th</sup>** to fill seats vacated by Mark DeSaulnier (D) in the **7<sup>th</sup> SD**; Steve Knight(R) **21<sup>st</sup> SD**; and Mimi Walters(R) in the **37<sup>th</sup> SD**. Here's our analysis & commentary....

...All three State Senators were elected to the U.S. House in November of 2014. They resigned their seats and were sworn in Jan. 5<sup>th</sup>. Gov. Jerry Brown set the special primary for March 17<sup>th</sup>. If there is no majority winner in the primary the candidates will face off on May 19<sup>th</sup>...

☒ **7<sup>th</sup> SD - Calpeek.com** doesn't expect any major surprises. The 7<sup>th</sup> SD has a 43.53% Demo registration vs. 28.59% for the GOP, with 22.24% no party preference...

...There are three Democrats in the primary: former Assemblywoman Joan Buchanan; current Assemblywoman Susan Bonilla; and Terry Kremin. Mark Meuser is the only Republican in this race. Buchanan's 16th AD was won by a Republican – Catharine Baker who benefited from a bitter Demo primary between Steve Glazer and Tim Sbranti. Sbranti won, but was so beat up Baker won...

...Buchanan has a new poll by the Demo polling firm of Garin-Hart-Yang Research. The survey was conducted Jan. 12 among 401 likely voters. In a 4-way race, Buchanan leads with 29%, followed by Mark Meuser at 26%, Bonilla at 12% and Kremin with 3%. Undecided and none are at 30%. FYI: Buchanan was just endorsed by the Tri Valley Demo Club...

... In a head-to-head with Bonilla, it's Buchanan 38% vs. 17% for Bonilla and neither/undecided 36%. Buchanan has a lead because she has a larger base (60%) in the 7<sup>th</sup> SD. In her own 14<sup>th</sup> AD, Bonilla has 75% name ID...

☒ **21<sup>st</sup> SD** – The battle for new U.S. Rep. Steve Knight may not develop if former State Sen. Sharon Runner(R) decides to run. She recently said she was 99.9% sure committed to run for Knight's seat. If she doesn't other GOPers who might run are Palmdale Mayor Jim Leford and Lancaster Mayor R. Rex Parris. Also on the GOP side are businessman Sal Chavez and Hesperia Mayor Eric Schmidt. The lone Demo is Star Moffatt. FYI: the registration is 35.94% GOP and 38.01% Demo. No party preference is 20.23%...

☒ **37<sup>th</sup> SD** – Only two Republicans so far. State Sen. Mimi Walters(R) was elected to the U.S. House. They are Assemblyman Don Wagner and former Orange Co. Sup. John Moorlach. Moorlach is very conservative. He was also the County-Treasurer-Tax Collector. Moorlach probably has better name ID because he has been on the ballot numerous times. Assemblyman Don Wagner has one big advantage: Walters has endorsed him for the 37<sup>th</sup> SD. FYI: Wagner was just endorsed by new Orange Co. Sup. Michelle Steel. Moorlach has been endorsed by Orange Co..Sup. Shawn Nelson, who will also serve as Moorlach's campaign chairman. Stay tuned...

#### **CAMPAIGN 2015: U.S. HOUSE SHORT TAKES**

Editor's Note: Here's a short report on the U.S. House...

☐ **U.S. CONGRESS BEGINS WITH HORRIBLE NUMBERS** – A new Gallup Poll reports the Republican-

lead Congress starts the 114<sup>th</sup> session with only a **16%** job approval rating. That's the same rating as what the 113<sup>th</sup> session ended. Not good...

☐ **SCHIFF JOINS 'GANG OF EIGHT'** – U.S. Rep. Adam Schiff(D-Burbank) was named by House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi as the new ranking member of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence. The committee oversees the Homeland Security Dept., the CIA and the FBI. Threats from terrorism and reinforcing the U.S.'s cyber security laws are two of the jobs Schiff has to monitor. Schiff is also the co-founder and chair of the Democratic Study Group on National Security...

☐ **LIEU ASSIGNED TO BUDGET PANEL** – The Torrance-base Ted Lieu has been named to the House Committee on the Budget. This is a great assignment for Lieu. Lieu noted that when he was in the State Senate, the legislature put Calif.'s fiscal house in order. Lieu was elected House Democratic Freshman Class President...

☐ **CARSON NAMED TO HOUSE INTEL PANEL** – U.S. Rep. Andre Carson(D-IN) has been appointed to the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence by House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi. Carson is a Muslim. He also has an extensive background in law enforcement and worked in intelligence and counter-terrorism for the Indiana Dept. of Homeland Security. There has been some GOP blowback...

☐ **REPUBLICANS DIDN'T NEED THIS.** U.S. Rep. Randy Weber apologized for comparing President Barack Obama to Adolph Hitler. Weber was tweeting about the terrorist attack in Paris when he said, “Even Adolph Hitler thought it more important than Obama to get to Paris.” Robert Singer, CEO of the World Jewish Congress, said “That is putting Mr. Obama on a level with the most evil mass murderer of all times and crosses a red line.” Weber was one of 25 GOP house members who did NOT vote for John Boehner for Speaker. Mr. Nice Guy. Stay tuned...

#### **CAMPAIGN 2015: BAUGH RETIRES AS CHAIR OF ORANGE CO. GOP. WHITAKER CHAIR**

Editor's Note: After 11 years, former GOP Assemblyman Scott Baugh has retired as chair of the Orange Co. Republican Party. The new chair is Orange City Councilman Fred Whitaker. Here's our analysis & commentary...

...Scott Baugh's tenure as head of the Orange Co. Republican Party was just about finished and he handed the gavel to Whitaker, who is allied with the Orange

other reason why Baugh called it quits...

...There was **no** GOP circular firing squad with the change from Baugh to Whitaker, but some Orange Co. Republicans are thrilled with Whitaker. Former State Sen. Dick Ackerman thought about the chairmanship job, but backed off. In a story in the O.C. Register by Martin Wisckol, Ackerman said he supports Whitaker. "He's a solid conservative guy. He can do it --- it's just going to take more work."...

...Whitaker said his new job would be different from his previous work on behalf of GOP candidates. "I'm usually behind the scenes and under the radar." He's a member of the Orange Lincoln Club. Part of Whitake's job will be raising money. He doesn't have Baugh's touch, but with help he should be fine..

...Whitaker's main job will be registering new GOPers to the party. Statewide Republican registration is about 30%. The key problem for Whitaker is to fix the GOP brand. Right now it is not selling. Stay tuned...

#### L.A. CITY ELECTION

#### **CAMPAIGN 2015: CHARTER AMENDMENTS 1 & 2 ARE CRITICAL ITEMS ON MARCH 3RD BALLOT**

Editor's Note: Voter turn out in L.A. City elections has been dreadful in the past few election cycles. In the 2013 runoff for mayor between Eric Garcetti and Wendy Greuel the turnout was just 23%. That's not acceptable for the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest city in the U.S. There is a way to fix the problem. Charter Amendments 1 & 2 would combine city and school board races with State and Federal elections. Here's our analysis & commentary...

...*Calpeek.com* can only think of one drawback to these two amendments. They won't take effect until 2020. That's my only complaint: make it sooner...

...The group backing Charter Amendments 1 & 2 is called **Citizens for Increased Voter Participation**. Dan Schnur from the USC Unruh Institute is one of the chairs. The other two chairs are Common Cause executive director Kathay Feng and Fernando Guerra who is a poli-sci professor at LMU and was tapped by Council President Herb Wesson to lead a citizens' committee to explore ways to hike voting in Los Angeles city...

...The Citizens for Increased Voter Participation has hired Shallman Communications for paid media and media relations. The key to a win on March 3<sup>rd</sup> is a very good GOTV (get out the vote) effort. That means boots on the ground...

...The latest groups to endorse 1 & 2 are Los Angeles City Firefighters (UFLAC) Local 112; the League of Women

Voters and the Los Angeles League of Conservation Voters. Amendments 1 & 2 were approved almost without opposition. The one exception was Councilman Bernard Parks Sr. He thinks the city will be turning over the election functions to L.A. County...

...In the meantime, while we have to wait five years for this consolidation, the Los Angeles council should consider going to an **all-mail ballot**. It cuts expenses and the local election folks won't have to worry about hiring tons of extra people for polling places. Stay tuned...

#### **BELGIUM IN ATTACK MODE AGAINST TERRORISM. ALL EUROPE IS ON HIGH ALERT.**

Editor's Note: No sooner had the terror attack in Paris ended when Belgium security forces started to raid the hideouts and homes of suspected terrorists. Most sources say the Paris attack is what prompted Belgium to go after terrorists who had been trained in Iraq, Syria or Yemen. Here's our brief analysis and commentary...

...Former DOD and CIA chief Leon Panetta was on CNN's GPS show Jan. 18<sup>th</sup> and said, "Terrorists are now more aggressive than ever." He believes the U.S. will be attacked, sooner or later...

...The Paris attack with the two terrorist brothers was sponsored by AQAP (Al Qaeda Arabian Peninsula). 17 people were killed by the two brothers who didn't survive either. The other terrorist in Paris may have been ISIS sponsored. He was killed too...

...All of Western Europe is on high alert. Belgium paratroopers are walking the streets with police. France has the largest Muslim population with about 10,000. But it is the Belgium terrorists who flock to Syria and Yemen. The Yemen government is in a total meltdown...

...The problem is some of these Western European countries don't have secure borders or strong passport control. Terrorists coming back to Europe from Syria aren't checked closely...

...Instead of waiting for them to strike, Homeland Security and the FBI ought to follow Belgium's example and arrest these terrorists. FYI: according to a Politico story by Michael Crowley the FBI has a Countering Violent Extremism Office which was set up in 2011. But that office is underfunded and there is lots of turnover...

...The U.S. Intel sources believe there are about 100 Muslims with U.S. passports who are in Syria. Of that number these same sources say about a dozen are back in the U.S. and are under observation. The U.S. is send-

ing 400 troops to help train volunteers from Syria. Sources aren't sure how that will work out – there are so many factions in Syria that we could end up training the wrong people...

...Another part of the anti-terror fight is backing free speech and expression in Europe and the U.S. A story in LAObserved says this week Los Angeles' largest Jewish weekly, The Jewish Journal, is renaming the masthead to Jewish Hebdo. Editor in chief Rob Eshman has a personal message in the story. "It's no more mister nice guy. In 2008 I had a chance to make a statement in defense of satire, and I passed. I now see I was wrong. Enough thinking that it's OK to mock Christianity or Jews, but God forbid, Islam. Enough." Eshman's comments are worth reading. Stay tuned...

### SHORT TAKES & OBITUARIES

Editor's Note: Here are some news items you might have missed...

❑ A sad note: Well-known Sacramento lobbyist Robert W. Lucas passed away Jan. 8, 2015. He was 68. He founded Lucas Advocates in 1983. He was a **Calpeek.com** subscriber until his death. He went to NYU. His law degree was earned at McGeorge School. He was in the Peace Corps and served in the State Legislature as a staffer, including principal consultant to the Joint Legislative Audit Committee. He'll be missed by his children and his many friends. R.I.P...

❑ Another sad note: journalist Stuart Loory died at his home in Brooklyn, NY at age 82. He had lung cancer. He had a wide-ranging career with the L.A. Times and CNN. He covered the White House in the 1960s and he was one of the reporters who made Richard Nixon's enemies list. Loory taught journalism at Ohio State and was an editor at the Chicago Sun-Times. In 1980 he joined CNN as managing editor of the DC bureau. He was also the CNN bureau chief in Moscow. R.I.P...

❑ Roz Wyman has a new job with the L.A. County Arts Commission. In 1953 she was elected to the Los Angeles City Council at 22 – the youngest person to ever be elected to the council. Roz is still a fixture in Demo Party politics. She is best known for getting the Dodgers to move from Brooklyn to L.A...

❑ NBC newswoman Ann Curry, who once anchored the Today Show, is leaving the network to form her own independent production company. She'll cover international stories for TV. She was part of the Today team that kept the Today show #1 in the ratings for 16 years. Stay tuned...

### CALPEEK'S INFOBAHN SHORT TAKES

Editor's Note: Here are some items you might have missed. This is a mix of national and Calif. stories...

❖ **Romney YES or NO – That is the question?** – A very good story about Mitt Romney's appearance before a big meeting of the RNC in San Diego. And all the news media wanted to know if Romney would run for President a third time. It was not only the news media, but GOP strategists and delegates too were playing the game of **Romney In, Romney Out**. Opinions were all over the place. The L.A. Times story by Mark Barabak and Seema Mehta was excellent...

...The best quote was at the end of the story. It was from President Reagan's former strategist Stu Spencer. The Spencer quote began with some Romney advisors saying that President Reagan won the White House on his third attempt. Quoting from the LAT story it said, "Spencer dismissed the comparison to the late president. Romney didn't win over hearts and minds like Reagan did in his first campaigns. He (Romney) was just the opponent of a guy Republicans didn't like, named Obama."...

...“I don't think it is good for the party,” he said of a potential third Romney run. “They (GOP) need some new blood and new ideas...He can't just switch and say 'I'm the new Romney' and get away with it.”...

❖ **Calif. Marijuana Activists Get Ready for 2016** - If they are looking for support from U.S. Sen. Dianne Feinstein, forget it. The Calif. lawmaker is not swayed by new polls showing more acceptance of legalized pot for recreational use. DiFi sent off letter to AG Eric Holder and Secretary of State John Kerry. The letter said in part, “We are already seeing signs that the U.S. position on drug control issues have been weakened.” That quote was from an L.A. Times story by Evan Halper...

❖ **L.A. County Demo Party Endorses Huizar** – I guess the county Demo Party doesn't care about women's issues and sexual harassment. As **Calpeek.com** has noted before Huizar *can't keep his locket in his pocket*. If the local Demo Party didn't want to endorse former Sup. Gloria Molina, they should have stayed neutral. Stay tuned...