



## Midday Roundup: Boehner to Obama, ‘See you in court’

By Lynde Langdon

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**Legal battle.** A sharply divided House of Representatives approved on Wednesday a Republican plan to sue President Barack Obama, accusing him of overstepping the bounds of his constitutional authority. The lawsuit’s supporters accuse Obama of exceeding his powers in implementing the Affordable Care Act, saying he has enforced provisions he likes and ignored others. They also point to the president’s failure to notify Congress before releasing five Taliban members from the U.S. military prison at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, in exchange for captive Army Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl, blocking the deportation of some children who are in the country illegally, and waiving some provisions of the No Child Left Behind education law. Although the House authorized the suit, leaders did not give a timeline for filing it.

**An expensive failure.** Today, a House panel receives the results of a months-long investigation into what went wrong with last fall’s launch of Healthcare.gov. The Government Accountability Office faults the administration for lacking effective planning or oversight practices for website development. The government also provided contractors with no coherent plan, instead jumping around from issue to issue, the report states. As a result, costs exploded. The investigation blamed the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services for failing to follow up on how well the contractors performed. The site has so far cost taxpayers \$840 million.

**Word trap.** This explains why conservatives are so eager to read all of Lois Lerner’s emails. Lerner is the former head of the Internal Revenue Service’s tax-exempt division accused of using her position to antagonize conservative groups. On Wednesday, the House Ways and Means Committee released a series of emails from November 2012 in which Lerner refers to some Republicans as “crazies” and worse. Congress has not been able to access many of Lerner’s earlier emails, which the IRS says were destroyed after her computer hard drive crashed.

**Signs of life.** President Barack Obama on Wednesday took credit for a healthy economic report. The Department of Commerce estimated the second quarter gross domestic product rose by 4 percent. The president told a friendly audience in Kansas City that his policies are turning the economy around. But economist Dan Mitchell of the Cato Institute said the GDP should have grown 4 to 5 percent consistently since the recession ended in 2009. Mitchell claims the

economy is still under-performing because of an unfriendly tax code and Obamacare regulations that limit private-sector job growth.

**Delayed start.** An official international investigation team finally reached the crash site of Malaysia Airlines Flight 17 in Ukraine today, two weeks after a missile shot down the plane. The team includes police and forensics experts from the Netherlands and Australia. Fighting between rebel forces and the Ukrainian government has kept the investigators away from the site. As many as 80 bodies remain there, said Australian Foreign Minister Julie Bishop, speaking to the Australian Broadcasting Corporation from Ukraine. Associated Press reporters near the crash site said clashes were still taking place in the vicinity of the wreckage today.

**Torture tactics.** A forthcoming Senate report excoriates the CIA for its interrogation and detention practices after the 9/11 attacks, according to a White House document. “This report tells a story of which no American is proud,” says the four-page White House document that contains the State Department’s response to the classified Senate report, a summary of which is expected to be released in the coming weeks. The report concludes the CIA’s techniques on al-Qaeda detainees captured after the 2001 attacks were far more brutal than previously understood. The tactics failed to produce life-saving intelligence, the report asserts, and the CIA misled Congress and the Justice Department about the interrogation program.