

Inside the Beltway: Gary Johnson: Got karma?

By [Jennifer Harper](#)

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Hey, [Gary E. Johnson](#)'s still standing, still touring: the Libertarian presidential hopeful, in fact, is quite cheerful these days, having drawn 5 percent of the national vote in multiple polls. The phenomenon has prompted [Mr. Johnson](#) to insist he be included in presidential debates with President Obama and [Mitt Romney](#), which begin Oct 3. Tanned and resolute, [Mr. Johnson](#) was in the nation's capital on Monday with an entourage of two, but a full schedule. And yes, the sight of the [White House](#) gives this true Washington outsider great pause whenever he comes to town.

“Yes, I want to be there. I see myself in there. It's really a matter of karma. I visualize myself in the [White House](#),” [Mr. Johnson](#) tells Inside the Beltway, adding that his personal style and Southwestern roots would be right at home in the hallowed halls of 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue.

“One thing I would do,” the former New Mexico governor vows. “If I became president, I'd ground Air Force One. Who needs that expense? And I'd also stop snarling traffic wherever I went. That's got to go, too.”

HUCKABEE PLAYS CHICKEN

“Let's affirm a business that operates on Christian principles and whose executives are willing to take a stand for the godly values we espouse,” declares [Mike Huckabee](#). The Fox News host and one-time presidential hopeful is irked by what he calls “vitriolic assaults” on the \$4 billion Chick-fil-A fast-food empire after its CEO, [Dan Cathy](#), publicly spoke out against gay marriage. Those remarks, in turn, outraged Boston Mayor [Thomas Menino](#), who plans to bar the franchise from his city, and “Muppets” creator [Jim Henson Co.](#), which has ended a partnership with the restaurants. Interest groups, meanwhile, are organizing a boycott of some 1,600 Chick-fil-A stores nationwide.

[Mr. Huckabee](#), however, has declared Aug. 1 to be “Chick-fil-A Day,” and has issued a call for folks to patronize their local shop. Some 39,000 people have signed on.

“Too often, those on the left make corporate statements to show support for same sex marriage, abortion, or profanity, but if Christians affirm traditional values, we’re considered homophobic, fundamentalists, hate-mongers, and intolerant. This effort is not being launched by the Chick-fil-A company, and no one from the company or family is involved in proposing or promoting it,” [Mr. Huckabee](#) advises.

WHERE’S BUDDY?

Former presidential hopeful Buddy Roemer refused to take any donation larger than \$100 during his short but intense campaign for the [White House](#). [Mr. Roemer](#) has not given up his quest to get big money out of politics, however, and will appear before the [Senate Judiciary subcommittee](#) on the Constitution, civil rights and human rights on Tuesday for a hearing, “Taking Back Our Democracy: Responding to Citizens United and the Rise of Super PACs.” [Mr. Roemer](#), in fact, has already founded the Reform Project, a nonpartisan organization taking on “unfair use of money in our political system.” He deems it downright “undemocratic.”

Also taking the stand: Harvard University law professor Lawrence Lessig and Ilya Shapiro, senior fellow at the Cato Institute.

“I look forward to telling Congress and the American people about the corruption and special interests that are paralyzing our republic. I will end by telling America that there is nothing we cannot fix together, and the Reform Project will begin to do so by uniting reformers from all over the country to put an end to business-as-usual,” [Mr. Roemer](#) tells the Beltway.

BANE OF DEMOCRATS

[Bain](#) is the bane of Democrats, not Republicans.

“Despite concerted Democratic attacks on his business record, Republican challenger [Mitt Romney](#) scores a significant advantage over President Obama when it comes to managing the economy, reducing the federal budget deficit and creating jobs,” says USA Today political writer Susan Page, regarding a new finding released by her newspaper and the Gallup Poll on Monday.

“By more than 2-1 — 63 percent to 29 percent — those surveyed say [Romney](#)’s background in business, including his tenure at the private equity firm [Bain Capital](#), would cause him to make good decisions, not bad ones, in dealing with the nation’s economic problems over the next four years,” she continues. “The findings raise questions about Obama’s strategy of targeting [Bain](#)’s record in outsourcing jobs and hammering [Romney](#) for refusing to commit to releasing more than two years of his tax returns.”