

The Washington Post

Wonkbook: Are we near another sequester deal?

Posted by Evan Soltas on - February 7, 2013

Top op-eds

DIONNE: A Republican rethink, or a rebranding? “The good news is that some Republicans have decided that the party moved too far to the right and are backing off long-standing positions on tax increases, guns and immigration. Their new flexibility, combined with President Obama’s new post-election aggressiveness, is producing a quiet revolution in Washington. The place is becoming less dysfunctional...A lot of the rebranding efforts are superficial yet nonetheless reflect an awareness that the party has been asking the wrong questions, talking about the wrong issues and limiting the range of voters it’s been addressing.” E.J. Dionne in The Washington Post.

KLEIN: The Republican establishment is reasserting control. “The Republican Party isn’t reinventing itself so much as reverting to its previous form. There’s little evidence of a rethinking of core Republican policy ideas. There’s no obvious analogue to the Democratic Leadership Council of the late 1980s and early 1990s, which was a moderating influence on the Democrats, or even to the ‘compassionate conservatism’ that George W. Bush promoted to the nation in 2000.” Ezra Klein in Bloomberg.

CILLIZZA: Rubio, the Republican leader. “The more intriguing narrative that unspools from the choice of Rubio is how Tuesday night’s speech likely kicks off a period in which the GOP puts the Florida senator forward as its de facto foil to President Obama. The simple truth is that the national Republican party lacks a leader at the moment, someone who can effectively articulate a counter-message to the one Obama is delivering to the country.” Chris Cillizza in The Washington Post.

PIERREHUMBERT: The myth of ‘Saudi America.’ “Like swallows returning to San Juan Capistrano, every December some 20,000 geoscientists flock to San Francisco for the fall meeting of the American Geophysical Union...This session dealt, in a hard-headed, geological, show-me-the-numbers way, with the claim that we are at the brink of a new era of oil and natural gas abundance...The geological considerations expose a number of common threads of faulty reasoning that pervade the current crop of starry-eyed projections of endless oil abundance.” Raymond T. Pierrehumbert in Slate.

MILLER: Raise the minimum wage. “Want more proof that the boundaries of debate in American politics are absurdly narrow and unequal to our challenges? Then ask yourself why an overdue, common-sense increase in the minimum wage is not on the agenda of either the president or the ‘new and improved’ Republican party.” Matt Miller in The Washington Post.

HARSHAW: The postmaster’s challenge. “Sometimes to get the attention of Congress, you need to hit it right in the constituents...Still, it’s good to see Donahoe take on the postal-workers unions, which wrongly blame pension-funding requirements for all the service’s ills, and Congress, whose efforts to micromanage change have ended up tying his hands. But the Saturday switch needs to be part of a much larger overhaul at Ben Franklin’s old shop.” Tobin Harshaw in Bloomberg.

TANNER: Research funds shouldn’t be used for industrial policy. “[T]here is no reason that government medical research shouldn’t receive the same critical scrutiny as any other program...An industrial policy for medical research is still an industrial policy — and likely to have the same inefficiencies and unintended consequences.” Michael D. Tanner in Bloomberg.