### T- UNI

#### Interpretation – toward means in the direction of

Michigan Supreme Court 1914 [Michigan Reports: Cases Decided in the Supreme Court of Michigan, Volume 180, Google Books]

Under 3 Comp. Laws, § 11510 (5 How. Stat. [2d Ed.] § 14559), providing that “any person who shall discharge without injury to any other person, any firearm, while intentionally, without malice, aimed at or toward any person, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor,” etc., acts carelessly done, without design to do mischief, are punishable.¶ 2. Same—“Toward”—Construction of Statute.¶ It is sufficient, in a prosecution for violating the statute, to show that the accused was making use of a rifle pointed in the direction of a passenger on a car and discharged the weapon in that direction, without striking any one. The word “toward” means in a course or line leading in the direction of.

#### B. Violation – the resolution says economic engagement TOWARD Cuba, Mexico, or Venezuela, means the engagement can only be uni-directional. The aff’s engagement is multilateral.

#### C. Voting Issue

#### 1. Limits – tons of bi-directional affs that they could read – explodes the neg research burden

#### 2. Ground – they jack bi-directional CP ground and DA links based off of uni-directional action

### 1NC EU CP

#### Plan Text: The European Union should economically engage with Mexico

#### EU is primed to engage with Mexico and trade relations are only getting better

Mexico – EU Strategic Partnership, 2010 (<http://www.sre.gob.mx/csocial_viejo/contenido/comunicados/2010/mayo/plan_ingles.pdf>, “JOINT EXECUTIVE PLAN”) A.V.

Mexico and the European Union agree that their Free Trade Agreement, in force since July 2000, has led to a major increase in trade and investment flows in both directions, making the European Union Mexico's second largest trading partner. The economic and trade relations between the parties have been consolidated in the nearly ten years the Treaty has been in force: likewise, the bilateral agreements for the promotion and reciprocal protection of investment concluded between Mexico and 16 EU Member States have contributed to establishing a framework of legal certainty for the development of investment. However, the Treaty still offers considerable potential for expanding economic relations between Mexico and the European Union by deepening trade liberalisation and facilitating trade. Mexico and the European Union agree that the trade component of the Global Agreement has been implemented efficiently through the joint bodies, including the special committees provided for in the Treaty. Issues relating to the bilateral trade agenda are resolved by those bodies and the relevant consultation takes place, an on-going process which enables solutions to be found to differences, and to discuss issues of common interest such as rules of origin, customs procedures, technical barriers to trade, sanitary and phytosanitary measures and intellectual property rights, including geographical indications and denomination of origin , which arise in the context of an increasingly intense trade relationship. Mexico and the European Union also share the view that the discussion of economic issues (such as sustainable development and macro-economic stability) within the framework of the Strategic Partnership will provide important guidelines for progress on the trade agenda and matters relating to the Treaty. In response to the world economic and financial crisis, Mexico and the European Union have discussed in various fora their concerns about the necessary measures to return to the path of growth. They share the view that exit strategies from the extraordinary measures taken to mitigate the crisis must be designed expeditiously and implemented as soon as the recovery takes a firm hold. They agree that it remains a high priority to regulate financial markets better, and to curb protectionism Mexico and the EU confirm their adherence to the G20 stand against protectionist measures and to the commitment of rectifying any such measures so as to avoid further deterioration of international trade. Both Mexico and the EU express their determination to continue working to achieve the necessary agreements in order to move forward towards a prompt conclusion of the Doha Round. Leaders affirm their commitment to reach an ambitious, comprehensive and balanced agreement to fulfil the development objectives of the Doha Round, to significantly foster trade flows in agriculture, industrial goods and services among and between developed and developing countries, as well as to promote effective trade rules, trade facilitation and all other remaining issues. Mexico and the EU believe that closure of the Doha Round in 2010 should take place on the basis of progress already made. The EU and Mexico underline that the time has come to move to a phase of direct, intense and specific engagement. Against that backdrop, Mexico and the European Union agree to continue working within the framework of the institutional mechanisms established in their Free Trade Agreement in order to strengthen their economic and trade links, and agree in particular to: • Promote coordination within the framework of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) in pursuit of a Doha Round agreement that is ambitious, balanced and comprehensive in order to combat protectionism, foster trade flows and address the needs of developing countries. • Pursue joint efforts in order to improve the conditions for bilateral trade and investment relations as provided for in the EU-Mexico Free Trade Agreement. Work to enhance economic integration with our common partners in Latin America in order to encourage economic development in the region and enhance competitiveness. • Establish a dialogue on transport in order to increase air links between Mexico and the EU, expanding trade and tourist flows.

### 1NC DC

#### Kerry is pushing climate cooperation with India now and has to stay focused to overcome resistance – cooperation is key to global modeling

Revkin 6/27 (Andrew C., New York Times Opinion Section, Kerry Proposes U.S.-India Push on Carbon and Climate, 6/27/13, http://dotearth.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/06/27/kerry-proposes-u-s-india-push-on-carbon-and-climate/?\_r=0)//LA

Shortly after prodding India in a New Delhi speech to find ways to cut greenhouse gas emissions, Secretary of State John Kerry sent a “Your Dot” piece emphasizing that he sees this as a partnership between two dynamic, innovative democracies. Here’s Kerry’s fresh pitch, followed by my initial reaction: I was in India this week for the fourth U.S.-India Strategic Dialogue, joined by my friend from Massachusetts and one of the smartest, most creative leaders in government, Energy Secretary Ernie Moniz. Every time I visit India, it’s as if I set foot in a different country, a country racing forward to meet the economic and development demands of modernity, a boisterous democracy where debate is a prized commodity. But the country I visited this week was also grappling with the impact of extraordinary flooding responsible for the heartbreaking loss of lives and livelihoods. Here, too, extreme weather events are causing unbelievable disruption and dislocation — and India is not alone: extreme weather events are increasing all over the world and 12 of the hottest 14 years on record have occurred since 2000. Just last week, the World Bank reported that within the next generation that same warming atmosphere could lead to widespread water and food shortages, historic heat waves, prolonged droughts, and more intense flooding. And tragically, India is a primary candidate for all four. India helps feed the world, but extreme heat could actually cut in half yields of the most productive areas, wreaking havoc on global food prices. The Himalayan glaciers are receding, threatening the supply of water to almost a billion people. What does that tell us? It underscores the imperative that we act forcefully and cooperatively on climate change, not because of ideology, but because of science. The global climate challenge is about opportunity, security, even our very survival in the long term. These challenges are interconnected and we have the opportunity — right now — to address them in ways that move our economies forward and deliver tangible benefits to the global community. The good news is that if we address climate change the right way, it’s not going to hurt our economies; it’ll actually grow them. Staring us in the face today is one of the greatest economic opportunities of all time – the clean energy market. The new energy market is a $6 trillion market and its fastest growing segment by far is clean energy. [His office said this figure comes from an estimate for the global energy market made by the venture capitalist John Doerr.] This is not just about air and water and weather, it’s about job creation, capturing investment, and improving our economies. My time in India, fortuitously, came on the eve of President Obama announcing a series of domestic measures to reduce U.S. greenhouse gas emissions. Our decisive action at home empowers us to make more progress internationally on the shared global challenge of climate change. We in the United States recognize our responsibility to lead on climate action and we are committed to doing our part by taking significant actions to reduce our own emissions. Under President Obama, the United States has done more to combat climate change and reduce greenhouse gas emissions than ever before, both at home and abroad. And the announcement just this week of actions that include cutting domestic carbon pollution from new and existing power plants and increasing the use of renewable and clean energy sources puts tangible action behind our words. India and the United States are particularly well-positioned to roll up our sleeves and cooperate to address climate change. We have strong foundations to build on together, and I believe that by joining forces, India and the United States can make this leap for the benefit of both our countries and the world. We can, I believe, do so in a way that erases the anxiety (quite understandable) in a country like India that wants to grow and develop just as we did in the 1800s and 1900s. But the beauty of today’s technology is that India can grow clean – an option the United States didn’t have during our time of economic transformation from an agrarian to an industrialized nation. We can work on this together. That is why we announced this week the formation of a U.S.-India Working Group on Climate Change to seek new ways to find solutions and push the curve of discovery. This new Working Group will allow us build on our common values and seize the common possibilities that lie ahead of us. My bottom-line take away from my climate and energy discussions in India? The world’s largest democracy and the world’s oldest democracy, both scientific leaders, can and must do more together to confront the climate challenge – and if we get it right, our partnership can be an example for the world. Kerry will likely face resistance in seeking lockstep commitments, of course, given that India’s prime challenge is bringing reliable electricity and affordable fuels by any means to its billion-plus citizens — some 400 million of whom were unaffected by last year’s blackouts because they have no access to electricity at all. As I’ve written, some of that new energy can and should come through a push on renewable sources, particularly in villages that are unlikely to be on a conventional power grid for years, if ever. But many parts of India could use energy provided by any means. In his New Delhi speech, Kerry spoke of India joining “China and the United States and other major economies in order to rapidly develop joint technology and pilot programs for low- or no-carbon strategies.” This is a sound idea, but could rub Indian officials the wrong way. More than a few times, Indian diplomats and officials have told me they bristle every time they see India lumped with China in discussions of obligations to eschew fossil fuels, given that India’s per-capita energy use is less than a third that of China. Still, Kerry is right that the prosperous, urban side of India, with a straining, highly inefficient electrical grid, traffic-choked streets and other sources of energy waste, can do plenty to cut emissions even as it boosts energy access. One opportunity was unmentioned in Kerry’s speech and this post: the chance for the United States to help India develop its shale gas, an energy source that India is keen on tapping and that is cleaner than other fossil fuel choices. As with China, nurturing partnerships that spread best drilling practices for gas can be a win for climate and clean air — if gas is developed in place of coal (or dirty diesel). [Grist has some reactions from an environmental campaigner in India.] Over all, there’s a lot of promise in nurturing a partnership between the United States and India on expanding energy choices that work for the long haul. I hope Kerry keeps at it.

#### An agreement over the gulf requires immense diplomatic capital— empirics prove

Clinton 12 (Hillary Rodham, Former US Secretary of State and Future President of the USA swag, Energy Diplomacy in the 21st Century, Speech Delivered at Georgetown University 10/18/12, http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2012/10/199330.htm)//LA

I want to mention one additional diplomatic challenge we’re focused on: how to manage resources that cross national boundaries. Boundaries are not always clearly delineated, especially at sea. If oil or gas is discovered in an area two countries share or where boundaries are inexact, how will they develop it? Earlier this year, after a *long negotiation led by the State Department*, the United States and Mexico reached a groundbreaking agreement on oil and gas resources in the Gulf of Mexico, and we will be sending it to Congress for action soon. The agreement clearly lays out how the United States and Mexico will manage the resources that transcend our maritime boundary. Now, in addition to these examples of energy diplomacy, we’re also *focused* on our second area of engagement: *energy transformation* – helping to promote new energy solutions, including renewables and energy efficiency, to meet rising demand, diversify the global energy supply, and address climate change. The transformation to cleaner energy is central to reducing the world’s carbon emissions and it is the core of a strong 21st century global economy. But we know very well that energy transformation cannot be accomplished by governments alone. In the next 25 years, the world is going to need up to $15 trillion in investment to generate and transmit electricity. Governments can and will provide some of it, but most will come from the private sector. Now, that’s not only a huge challenge, but a huge opportunity. And I want to make sure that American companies and American workers are competing for those kinds of projects. After all, American companies are leaders across the field of energy – leaders in renewables, high-tech, smart-grid energy infrastructure, bioenergy, energy efficiency. And in the coming decades, American companies should have the chance to do much more business worldwide, and by doing so, they will help to create American jobs. Now, governments can do several things to promote energy transformation, like educate our citizens about the value of energy efficiency and clean technology. But perhaps the most important thing we can do is enact policies that create an enabling environment that attracts investment and paves the way for large-scale infrastructure. In many parts of Central America and Africa, and in India and Pakistan, USAID supports training programs to help put power utilities on sounder commercial footing. And the Millennium Challenge Corporation is negotiating new compacts with several countries that would help them undertake wholesale, systemic energy reforms. And with the right business climate, agencies like the Export-Import Bank and the Overseas Private Investment Corporation can help seal the deals that allow U.S. exports to flow. As an example, let me tell you what we’re doing with our neighbors in Latin America. Earlier this year, at the Summit of the Americas, Colombia launched a new initiative it is leading with the United States called Connecting the Americas 2022. It aims to achieve universal access to electricity by the year 2022 through electrical interconnection in the hemisphere, linking electrical grids throughout the hemisphere from Canada all the way down to the southern tip of Chile, as well as extending it to the Caribbean. The Inter-American Development Bank, the World Bank, all the countries in the Organization of American States have joined this project. It stems from a broader effort called the Energy and Climate Partnership of the Americas, which I launched in 2010, which has sparked a wave of innovative partnerships across the hemisphere. Interconnection will help us get the most out of our region’s resources. It seems simple, but if one country has excess power, it can sell it to a neighbor. The climate variability across our region means that if one country has a strong rainy season, it can export hydropower to a neighbor in the middle of a drought. Plus, by expanding the size of power markets, we can create economies of scale, attract more private investment, lower capital costs, and ultimately lower the costs for the consumer. There’s another goal here as well. Thirty-one million people across the Americas lack access to reliable and affordable electricity. That clearly holds them back from making progress in so many areas. So one aim of Connect 2022 is to make sure that those 31 million people now do have power. With this single project, we will promote energy efficiency and renewable energy, fight poverty, create opportunity for energy businesses, including U.S. businesses, and forge stronger ties of partnership with our neighbors. It really is a win-win-win, in our opinion. Now, there’s another aspect of energy transformation that I think is important to mention. To achieve the levels of private sector involvement that we need, it takes a level playing field so all companies can compete. But you know very well in some parts of the world, the playing field is hardly level. Some countries dictate how much national content must be used in energy production, or they give subsidies to their nation’s companies to give them an edge. And that can be very challenging for American businesses to break through. So every day, in many parts of the world, *our diplomats are out there fighting* on behalf of American businesses and workers, taking aim at economic barriers and unfair practices. This September, we achieved a major breakthrough when the members nations of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation community agreed to cut tariffs on 54 key environmental goods, clearing the way for more trade in clean energy technology. At the same time that we’re pursuing energy transformation, however, we have to take on the issue of energy poverty. And that’s the third area of engagement I will mention. Because for those 1.3 billion people worldwide who do not have access to a reliable, sustainable supply of energy, it is a daily challenge and struggle. It also runs counter to energy transformation, because these people are burning firewood, coal, dung, charcoal, whatever they can get their hands on. They’re using diesel generators, and no electricity is more expensive than that. And besides, these are dirty forms of energy – bad for people’s health, bad for the environment. But it doesn’t have to be that way. We have the technology and know-how that can help people leapfrog to energy that is not only reliable and affordable, but clean and efficient. So energy transformation and ending energy poverty really do go hand in hand.

#### Warming causes extinction- laundry list of impacts – it outweighs the Aff

Deibel ‘7 [Terry L. Deibel, professor of IR @ National War College, 2007, Foreign Affairs Strategy, Conclusion: American Foreign Affairs Strategy Today]

Droughts, floods, and violent storms Consensus Disease and Illness 26% of GDP—Economy Thermohaline circulation collapse Runaway green house warming Positive Feedback, H2O vapor More true than Nuclear Winter Finally, there is one major existential threat to American security (as well as prosperity) of a nonviolent nature, which, though far in the future, demands urgent action. It is the threat of global warming to the stability of the climate upon which all earthly life depends. Scientists worldwide have been observing the gathering of this threat for three decades now, and what was once a mere possibility has passed through probability to near certainty. Indeed not one of more than 900 articles on climate change published in refereed scientific journals from 1993 to 2003 doubted that anthropogenic warming is occurring. “In legitimate scientific circles,” writes Elizabeth Kolbert, “it is virtually impossible to find evidence of disagreement over the fundamentals of global warming.” Evidence from a vast international scientific monitoring effort accumulates almost weekly, as this sample of newspaper reports shows: an international panel predicts “brutal droughts, floods and violent storms across the planet over the next century”; climate change could “literally alter ocean currents, wipe away huge portions of Alpine Snowcaps and aid the spread of cholera and malaria”; “glaciers in the Antarctic and in Greenland are melting much faster than expected, and…worldwide, plants are blooming several days earlier than a decade ago”; “rising sea temperatures have been accompanied by a significant global increase in the most destructive hurricanes”; “NASA scientists have concluded from direct temperature measurements that 2005 was the hottest year on record, with 1998 a close second”; “Earth’s warming climate is estimated to contribute to more than 150,000 deaths and 5 million illnesses each year” as disease spreads; “widespread bleaching from Texas to Trinidad…killed broad swaths of corals” due to a 2-degree rise in sea temperatures. “The world is slowly disintegrating,” concluded Inuit hunter Noah Metuq, who lives 30 miles from the Arctic Circle. “They call it climate change…but we just call it breaking up.” From the founding of the first cities some 6,000 years ago until the beginning of the industrial revolution, carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere remained relatively constant at about 280 parts per million (ppm). At present they are accelerating toward 400 ppm, and by 2050 they will reach 500 ppm, about double pre-industrial levels. Unfortunately, atmospheric CO2 lasts about a century, so there is no way immediately to reduce levels, only to slow their increase, we are thus in for significant global warming; the only debate is how much and how serous the effects will be. As the newspaper stories quoted above show, we are already experiencing the effects of 1-2 degree warming in more violent storms, spread of disease, mass die offs of plants and animals, species extinction, and threatened inundation of low-lying countries like the Pacific nation of Kiribati and the Netherlands at a warming of 5 degrees or less the Greenland and West Antarctic ice sheets could disintegrate, leading to a sea level of rise of 20 feet that would cover North Carolina’s outer banks, swamp the southern third of Florida, and inundate Manhattan up to the middle of Greenwich Village. Another catastrophic effect would be the collapse of the Atlantic thermohaline circulation that keeps the winter weather in Europe far warmer than its latitude would otherwise allow. Economist William Cline once estimated the damage to the United States alone from moderate levels of warming at 1-6 percent of GDP annually; severe warming could cost 13-26 percent of GDP. But the most frightening scenario is runaway greenhouse warming, based on positive feedback from the buildup of water vapor in the atmosphere that is both caused by and causes hotter surface temperatures. Past ice age transitions, associated with only 5-10 degree changes in average global temperatures, took place in just decades, even though no one was then pouring ever-increasing amounts of carbon into the atmosphere. Faced with this specter, the best one can conclude is that “humankind’s continuing enhancement of the natural greenhouse effect is akin to playing Russian roulette with the earth’s climate and humanity’s life support system. At worst, says physics professor Marty Hoffert of New York University, “we’re just going to burn everything up; we’re going to heat the atmosphere to the temperature it was in the Cretaceous when there were crocodiles at the poles, and then everything will collapse.” During the Cold War, astronomer Carl Sagan popularized a theory of nuclear winter to describe how a thermonuclear war between the Untied States and the Soviet Union would not only destroy both countries but possible end life on this planet. Global warming is the post-Cold War era’s equivalent of nuclear winter at least as serious and considerably better supported scientifically. Over the long run it puts dangers form terrorism and traditional military challenges to shame. It is a threat not only to the security and prosperity to the United States, but potentially to the continued existence of life on this planet.

### 1NC CIR

#### Obama has emerged from the shutdown as a clear winner – maintaining political capital is key to a bipartisan immigration deal

Sanders 10-22-13 (Bob Ray, “There's no better time for Obama to push for immigration reform”, <http://www.mcclatchydc.com/2013/10/22/206078/bob-ray-sanders-theres-no-better.html#storylink=cpy>, CMR)

**Now that the Republican hijacking of the federal government has been brought to an end**, perhaps President Barack **Obama and Congress can move on to other major issues that have been neglected too long**.¶ **The president**, in addition to wanting to work out a long-term budget deal, has said that he **is now ready to push for passage of a comprehensive immigration bill**, as well as rescuing the farm bill, which was gutted when GOP lawmakers stripped out the food stamp section.¶ Just a few months ago, **immigration reform looked promising, garnering bipartisan support** in the Senate. **A measure that** was long overdue **passed the upper chamber** in Congress last June, but **has been stalled in the House** as recalcitrant Republicans simply couldn't stomach the idea of providing a path to citizenship for the millions of illegal immigrants already in the country.¶ While **the Senate** bill has its faults - including adding 700 miles of new fencing along the U.S.-Mexico border - it is a compromise that, **if passed, would be a giant step toward improving the entire immigration system** and, at the same time, bringing illegal immigrants out of the shadows.¶ Obama got re-elected partly on his promise to pursue the issue aggressively, receiving 71 percent of the Latino vote. He has not been as aggressive as many would like, even though they're willing to cut him a little slack because of all the uncontrollable international crises and manufactured domestic distractions (like the shutdown of the government) he has had to deal with.¶ But **he shouldn't let anything get in his way this time**, even though Republicans in the House are vowing not to negotiate with him because the president stood his ground and refused to negotiate on his healthcare law in connection with raising the debt ceiling and ending the government shutdown.¶ House Speaker John Boehner, who has refused to bring the Senate bill to a vote, has said he won't bring any immigration legislation to the floor until a majority of his Republican caucus agrees.¶ That, in effect, means never. Or, if there is a bill that the majority of his party would support, you can almost bet it will be terribly inadequate, one that would not pass the Senate and one that the president wouldn't sign if it did.¶ Boehner, who has been on the losing end a lot lately, ought to be pressured into bringing the Senate bill to a vote. It's clear that on many of the important matters facing this country, the majority of his party in the House will reject just about anything the president supports.¶ Therefore, **it will be** left **up to the House Democrats and** the **moderate Republicans who are not afraid of the "tea party" to get an immigration bill passed**.¶ **Since the government shutdown fiasco, in which the GOP unmistakably was the loser**, **the president has the upper hand**, and **he should take the opportunity to press forward with his agenda**.¶ By no means am I suggesting that **Obama** become a bully or deliberately attempt to undermine Boehner's leadership, but he **shouldn't back away from this fight** again.¶ Every time an election approaches - and there's always an approaching election - it is suggested that it's the wrong time to bring up immigration reform.¶ Frankly, **there's no better time than right now** as candidates prepare to file for office and gear up their campaigns for the 2014 contests.

#### The plan sparks backlash over the process of ratification, and requires Presidential involvement

Phil Taylor 13, E&E Reporter, 1/9/13, “E&E: U.S.-Mexico transboundary agreement mired in Congress,” http://www.bromwichgroup.com/2013/01/ee-offshore-drilling-u-s-mexico-transboundary-agreement-mired-in-congress/

It is unclear who in the Senate objected to the agreement’s passage, but sources say it was likely out of concern for the process by which it was being passed rather than the substance of the agreement. ¶ That may stem in part from lingering uncertainty over whether the agreement is a treaty, which would require a two-thirds majority for Senate ratification, or an executive agreement, which would require implementing legislation to be passed by a majority in both chambers. ¶ Regardless, its failure was a surprise to staff on the ENR Committee who had crafted a news release in preparation for its passage but had to delete it after the agreement was blocked. ¶ According to the report by Foreign Relations Republicans, the Obama administration has yet to say whether the agreement is a treaty or an executive agreement but appears to prefer the latter. Mexico’s Senate ratified the agreement, suggesting it was interpreted as a treaty. ¶ If it is a treaty, a formal communication would need to be sent from the president to the Foreign Relations Committee, which would trigger hearings on the matter and allow Congress to interpret any ambiguous language in the agreement. ¶ That is important, because several provisions in the treaty “invite scrutiny and clarification,” according to the committee report. ¶ “The treaty doesn’t have every detail worked out,” said Neil Brown, a former adviser to Sen. Richard Lugar (R-Ind.) who was ranking member of the committee until his retirement earlier this month. ¶ For example, one section of the agreement calls for “common standards,” but it is unclear whether that requires companies to adopt U.S. safety and environmental standards or Mexico’s, which are considered less developed. Another area of the agreement creates a dispute resolution process without saying whether the arbitration is binding, the report said. ¶ The agreement would allow joint inspections by Interior’s BSEE and the Mexican government to ensure compliance with applicable laws. ¶ Some on the Foreign Relations Committee said they were miffed that the administration did not consult with them before pushing the agreement through in the lame duck.

#### Disad turns case; CIR’s critical to economic growth---multiple internals

Klein 13 Ezra is a columnist for The Washington Post. “To Fix the U.S. Economy, Fix Immigration,” 1/29, http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2013-01-29/to-fix-the-u-s-economy-fix-immigration.html

Washington tends to have a narrow view of what counts as “economic policy.” Anything we do to the tax code is in. So is any stimulus we pass, or any deficit reduction we try. Most of this mistakes the federal budget for the economy.¶ The truth is, **the most important piece of economic policy we pass** -- or don’t pass -- **in 2013** **may be** something we don’t think of as economic policy at all: **immigration reform.**¶ Congress certainly doesn’t consider it economic policy, at least not officially. Immigration laws go through the House and Senate judiciary committees. But consider a few facts about immigrants in the American economy: About a tenth of the U.S. population is foreign-born. **More than a quarter of U.S. technology and engineering businesses started from 1995 to 2005 had a foreign-born owner. In Silicon Valley, half of all tech startups had a foreign-born founder.**¶ **Immigrants begin businesses and file patents at a much higher rate than their native-born counterparts**, and while there are disputes about the effect immigrants have on the wages of low-income Americans**, there’s little dispute about their effect on wages overall: They lift them.¶** The economic case for immigration is best made by way of analogy. Everyone agrees that **aging economies with low birth rates are in trouble**; this, for example, is a thoroughly conventional view of Japan. **It’s** even **conventional wisdom about the U.S. The retirement of the baby boomers is correctly understood as an economic challenge.** The ratio of working Americans to retirees will fall from 5-to-1 today to 3-to-1 in 2050. **Fewer workers and more retirees is tough on any economy.**¶ Importing Workers¶ There’s nothing controversial about that analysis. But if that’s not controversial, then immigration shouldn’t be, either. **Immigration is essentially the importation of new workers. It’s akin to raising the birth rate, only easier**, because most of the newcomers are old enough to work. **And because living in the U.S. is considered such a blessing that even very skilled, very industrious workers are willing to leave their home countries and come to ours, the U.S. has an unusual amount to gain from immigration. When it comes to the global draft for talent, we almost always get the first-round picks -- at least, if we want them, and if we make it relatively easy for them to come here.**¶ From the vantage of naked self-interest, the wonder isn’t that we might fix our broken immigration system in 2013. It’s that we might not.¶ **Few economic problems wouldn’t be improved by more immigration.** **If you’re worried about deficits**, more young, **healthy workers paying into Social Security and Medicare are an obvious boon. If you’re concerned about the slowdown in new company formation and its attendant effects on economic growth, more immigrant entrepreneurs should cheer you. If you’re worried about the dearth of science and engineering majors in our universities, an influx of foreign-born students is the most obvious solution you’ll find.**