

# Obama, Senate Work Together On Trade Bill

BY DAVID ESPO  
AP Special Correspondent

WASHINGTON — The Obama administration and Senate Republicans worked in unusual harmony Tuesday to advance major trade legislation opposed by many rank-and-file Democrats, an expanding struggle already leaving a mark on the 2016 campaigns for the White House and control of Congress.

In rapid-fire order, the administration threatened to veto a proposed change in the trade bill to require U.S. negotiators to target currency manipulation more directly in trade talks, and Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell said the GOP was prepared to vote down the amendment.

"We'll be working hard to keep

any amendment off the bill that could tank it," he said of the proposal, backed by Sens. Rob Portman, R-Ohio, Debbie Stabenow, D-Mich. and others.

McConnell, R-Ky., is one of Obama's fiercest critics in Congress. His comment underscored the unusual political lines created by a bill to let the president negotiate global trade deals that Congress could approve or reject, but not change. The White House and pro-business Republicans support the measure, while union-backed Democrats oppose it.

Portman, who once served as President George W. Bush's special



Obama

trade representative, is also a likely supporter of the bill. At the same time, he faces a competitive re-election campaign in his Midwestern political swing state next year, and has played a central role in efforts to make the legislation require American negotiators to give higher importance to combatting currency manipulation by other countries.

The division has spilled over into the 2016 race for the White House. Former Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, whose husband negotiated the North American Free Trade Agreement when he sat in the White House, stubbornly refused Tuesday to say if she favored or opposed the legislation to give Obama the authority to conclude similar deals.

"I want to judge the final agree-

ment," she told reporters as she campaigned in Iowa. She said her concerns include any deal's impact on jobs, wages and economic expansion in the United States.

Her statement mirrors the apprehensions of many Democrats in Congress, who soon won't have the luxury of declining to state a position. They complain that they are being asked to trust Obama to conclude a trade deal they haven't seen — and wouldn't be able to change once they do.

The administration's veto threat came in the form of a letter from Treasury Secretary Jacob Lew to the bill's leading supporters. He warned that approving the amendment backed by Portman, Stabenow and others could cause trade partners to walk away from talks on a 12-nation

deal among countries that border the Pacific Ocean "and cause us to lose ground on holding countries accountable on currency."

He also warned it could "give our trading partners the power to challenge legitimate U.S. monetary policies needed to ensure strong employment and a healthy robust economy, an outcome we would find unacceptable."

The drive to give currency manipulation a more central role in trade talks is caused chiefly by concerns about Japan, which is part of the current round of negotiations. There are also constant concerns about China, which is not.

In his letter, Lew said the United States has worked hard to combat alleged currency manipulation by both nations in recent years.

# Motorcycle Gang Shootout Started With Parking Dispute

BY EMILY SCHMALL  
Associated Press

WACO, Texas — A deadly weekend shootout involving rival motorcycle gangs apparently began with a parking dispute and someone running over a gang member's foot, police said Tuesday.

Waco police Sgt. W. Patrick Swanton said an uninvited group appeared for Sunday's meeting of a loose confederation of biker gangs at a restaurant.

One man was injured when a vehicle rolled over his foot. That caused a dispute that continued inside the restaurant, where fighting and then shooting began, before the melee spilled back outside, Swanton said.

Authorities offered few details. It was not clear which gang was responsible for running over the biker's foot, or which gang the aggrieved biker belonged to.

When the shootout was over, nine people were dead and 18 wounded.

Police have said five biker gangs from across Texas had gathered in part to settle differences over turf.

Jimmy Graves, who described himself as an ambassador for the gang known as the Bandidos, disputed that claim, saying the groups had planned to discuss laws protecting motorcycle riders and other topics such as trademarks for club logos.

But he acknowledged that differences with other groups, such as the Cossacks, have been "simmering and brewing."

Another biker named Johnny Snyder said he was at the restaurant for a quarterly meeting to talk about legislative issues.

Snyder, a long-haul trucker, declined to describe what he saw inside the restaurant, saying he was only concerned with "not getting shot."

He is vice president of the Boozefighters Motorcycle Club in Waco, a group that Snyder says does charity events and family gatherings and is not a criminal gang.

About 50 weapons were confiscated, mostly knives and firearms, and Swanton said more than 100 weapons may be found once authorities are done analyzing the crime scene at the Twin Peaks restaurant, which is part of a national chain that features waitresses in revealing uniforms.

Preliminary autopsy results showed all nine of the dead were killed by gunshots. Many were hit in the head, neck, chest or torso. Most of the men were in their 40s, but they ranged in age from 27 to 65, according to reports released by a McLennan County justice of the peace.

Police have acknowledged firing on armed bikers, but it was unclear how many of the dead were shot by gang members and how many were shot by officers.

Of the injured, seven remain hospitalized. Swanton, who has been virtually the sole source of law enforcement informa-



JOYCE MARSHALL/FORT WORTH STAR-TELEGRAM/TNS  
**Law enforcement officers from around the area including the FBI and ATF are investigating the scene and providing security near Twin Peaks restaurant on Monday where a shooting between rival biker gang members left nine dead Sunday in Waco, Texas.**

tion on the fight, described their conditions as stable.

He said the investigation is being hampered by witnesses who "are not being honest with us."

Police are concerned that the brawl will invite retaliation and more violence, Swanton said.

"We would encourage them to try to be a little peaceable and let the bloodshed stop," he said.

About 170 bikers have been charged with engaging in organized crime. Swanton said more arrests are likely.

Katie Rhoten, whose husband, Theron Rhoten, was taken into custody, said he told her by phone from jail that he and two other members of a motorcycle club called Vice Grip had just pulled up to the restaurant.

"They got off their bikes, and bullets were ricocheting all around them, so they ducked and ran for cover," she said in an interview.

When her husband, a mechanic from Austin, and the others went back to retrieve their motorcycles, they were detained by police.

"They were told they were being held for questioning and released, and they sat in the parking lot for three, four, five hours."

Then, she said, police "changed their mind and arrested everybody on the scene."

Officers took into custody all sorts of "nonviolent, noncriminal people. I mean they got the Bikers for Christ guys in there."

In a memo dated May 1, the Texas De-

partment of Public Safety cautioned about increasing violence between the Bandidos and the Cossacks, Dallas TV station WFAA reported Monday.

The department's Joint Information Center bulletin said the tension could stem from Cossacks refusing to pay Bandidos dues for operating in Texas and for wearing a patch on their vest that claimed Texas as their turf without the Bandidos' approval.

"Traditionally, the Bandidos have been the dominant motorcycle club in Texas, and no other club is allowed to wear the Texas bar without their consent," the bulletin said, according to WFAA.

The bulletin said the FBI had received information that the Bandidos had discussed "going to war with Cossacks." It also outlined several recent incidents between the two groups, including one instance in March when about 10 Cossacks forced a Bandido to pull over along Interstate 35 near Waco and attacked him with "chains, batons and metal pipes before stealing his motorcycle," WFAA reported.

That same day, a group of Bandidos confronted a Cossack member fueling up at a truck stop in Palo Pinto County, west of Fort Worth, the bulletin said. When the Cossack member refused to remove the Texas patch from his vest, the Bandidos hit him in the head with a hammer and stole it.

The Department of Public Safety declined to release the bulletin to The Associated Press.

There are other documented instances of violence between the groups.

## Iraqi Govt. Struggles With IS Response

BAGHDAD (AP) — As it moves to try to reverse the stunning loss of Ramadi, the capital of Iraq's largest Sunni province, the Shiite-led government is hamstrung by the sectarian politics it has failed to overcome ever since the Islamic State group began its rampage more than a year ago.

Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi vowed Tuesday to arm Sunni tribesmen to help retake Ramadi, a plan the United States has encouraged to better empower the minority community in the fight to defend their cities and to reduce their support for the Sunni extremists.

But the pledge met immediate skepticism from Sunnis, given that similar promises after Islamic State militants seized the northern city of Mosul last summer were barely implemented.

It also met quick resistance from Shiite rivals within al-Abadi's own government, who oppose arming Sunnis.

At the same time, the government was rallying Iranian-backed Shiite militiamen to join the offensive, raising the prospect of dangerous frictions in a country that was nearly torn to pieces by bloody Shiite-Sunni violence from 2006-2007. Though the Shiite militiamen have been crucial to reversing other losses to IS militants, they have also been accused of abuses against Sunni residents of those areas.

## Pentagon: Iraqi Troops Abandoned Tanks

WASHINGTON (AP) — Iraqi troops abandoned dozens of U.S. military vehicles, including tanks, armored personnel carriers and artillery pieces when they fled Islamic State fighters in Ramadi on Sunday, the Pentagon said Tuesday.

A Pentagon spokesman, Col. Steve Warren, estimated that a half dozen tanks were abandoned, a similar number of artillery pieces, a larger number of armored personnel carriers and about 100 wheeled vehicles like Humvees. He said some of the vehicles were in working condition; others were not because they had not been moved for months.

This repeats a pattern in which defeated Iraq security forces have, over the past year, left behind U.S.-supplied military equipment, prompting the U.S. to destroy them in subsequent airstrikes against Islamic State forces.

Asked whether the Iraqis should have destroyed the vehicles before abandoning the city in order to keep them from enhancing IS's army, Warren said, "Certainly preferable if they had been destroyed; in this case they were not."

Warren also said that while the U.S. is confident that Ramadi will be retaken by Iraq, "It will be difficult."

## Clinton Says: 'I Want Those Emails Out'

CEDAR FALLS, Iowa (AP) — Hillary Rodham Clinton urged the State Department on Tuesday to speed the release of 55,000 pages of emails from her time as secretary of state, as her decision to spurn administration rules and use a private email address continued to dog her presidential campaign.

"I want those emails out," Clinton said at a campaign event in Iowa.

Clinton's comments came shortly after a federal judge rejected a State Department proposal to release the emails by next January. The judge instead ordered the agency to conduct a "rolling production" of the records in the meantime.

That all but guarantees a slow drip of revelations from the emails throughout Clinton's primary campaign, complicating her efforts to put the issue to rest. The agency's original plan would have set the release date just a few weeks before the Iowa caucuses and New Hampshire primary.

In an Associated Press-GfK poll released earlier this month, six in ten voters said the word "honest" describes Clinton only slightly well or not well at all. And the continuing stories about her use of a private email account run from a server at her New York home while in government have enabled Republicans to work at feeding perceptions she had things to hide.

## Bill Would Limit Ex-Presidents' Expenses

WASHINGTON (AP) — Bill Clinton, George W. Bush and other former presidents who earn lucrative speaking fees and draw other income would no longer be able to count on taxpayer dollars to pay for their post-White House office space and staff under a bill in the House.

On a voice vote, the House Oversight panel backed a measure Tuesday to limit taxpayer dollars for expenses, including travel, incurred by ex-presidents who earn more than \$400,000 a year.

U.S. taxpayers paid a total of \$3.5 million last year in pensions and benefits to the four living former presidents, including \$1.3 million for Bush and \$950,000 for Clinton, according to a report by the Congressional Research Service. Most of that money was for sprawling office space in Dallas and New York, respectively.

Both Clinton and Bush, like other ex-presidents before them, have earned millions in speaking fees since leaving office.

The oversight committee acted just days after Hillary Rodham Clinton reported that she and her husband earned more than \$30 million combined in speaking fees and book royalties since January 2014. The earnings put the couple in the top one-tenth of 1 percent of all Americans.

## Takata To Declare Air Bags Defective

WASHINGTON (AP) — Under pressure from U.S. safety regulators, Takata Corp. has agreed to declare 33.8 million air bags defective, a move that will double the number of cars and trucks included in what is now the largest auto recall in U.S. history.

The chemical that inflates the air bags can explode with too much force, blowing apart a metal inflator and sending shrapnel into the passenger compartment. The faulty inflators are responsible for six deaths and more than 100 injuries worldwide.

The agreement adds more than 18 million air bags to existing recalls, covering both the passenger and driver's side. The recalls of passenger-side air bags, previously limited to high-humidity states along the Gulf Coast, are now expanded nationwide by 10.2 million vehicles. A nationwide recall of driver's side air bags was expanded to include an additional 7.9 million vehicles.

"We know that owners are worried about their safety and the safety of their families," said Mark Rosekind, head of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, as he announced the agreement. "This is probably the most complex consumer safety recall in U.S. history."

Safety regulators sparred with Takata for the past year over the size of the recalls and the cause of the problem. For the most part, the air bag maker refused to declare the inflators defective and even questioned the agency's authority to order it to conduct a recall.

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er factor of 2.8, that amounts to \$20 million annually in the local economy.

Manufacturing looks to remain strong, but Kramer noted that manufacturers are also speaking about the challenge of finding workers to meet the demand.

Many workers — including recent high school graduates — can directly enter the workforce and take current jobs, Kramer said. Two-thirds of new local jobs don't require a two- or four-year degree, he added.

Workforce recruitment will remain a major challenge, Kramer said. Part of the key lies in attracting former state residents, he said.

"We have more young South Dakotans who are living outside the state than in South Dakota," he said. "We have to educate them on the opportunities in Yankton, which are pretty impressive."

The proposed solutions, he said, include finding jobs for prospective employees' spouses, the development of an alumni and veterans data base, recruitment at technical and community schools, support for Career and Technical Education (CTE) and the Regional Technical Education Center (RTEC) in Yankton, and regional career fairs.

Another challenge lies in providing additional housing for both current and new residents, Kramer said. Yankton

holds a 98 percent occupancy rate for its housing, far above the rate in many communities, he said. He provided an update on Westbrook Estates and other housing efforts.

"Where do we go to get the labor, and where are they going to live?" he asked of the two-pronged issue.

The local workforce shortage has driven up wages, Kramer said. Some Yankton manufacturers have raised their pay \$2 an hour, and Yankton County's manufacturing pay scale now rivals Sioux Falls, he said.

On another front, Kramer applauded the recent agreement between the City of Yankton and B-Y Water District for services. He also supported the proposed establishment of a Yankton County rail authority as a way of boosting local rail service and opening the door for federal dollars.

In his presentation, Woods spoke of the numerous projects undertaken and still facing the Yankton County Commission.

He pointed to the county site analysis as a major accomplishment. The South Dakota Department of Agriculture and the District III Planning and Development office in Yankton are conducting the analysis at no cost to the county, he said.

Woods pointed to another county's success in attracting a large dairy because of its site analysis. The completion of Yankton County's site analysis will shorten the timeline for bringing an agriculture venture to the county, he said.

On another front, Woods noted the refinancing of Safety

Center Building should result in an estimated 10-year savings of \$389,000. In addition, the county's transportation master plan gives it priority status under a transportation bill passed by this year's Legislature, he said.

Other action includes progress on the Napa Junction tax increment district, caring for rippap at the Old Highway 50 bridge (also known as Fleg's Bridge) and a resolution supporting the Keystone pipeline.

In terms of public safety, Woods noted the importance of the Lewis and Clark Lake area storm siren. He pointed to the key role of an early warning during last week's EF-2 tornado in Delmont. The Douglas County community of around 250 residents saw nine injuries but no fatalities.

The storm siren should play a critical role at Lewis and Clark Lake, which attracts one million visitors annually, Woods said.

"You have thousands and thousands of visitors to the lake area," he said. "We need to warn them when the time comes (with severe storms)."

Other accomplishments during the past year included the appointment of county treasurer Patty Vavra, replacing long-time treasurer Pam Marchand who retired. Marchand worked nearly 40 years in the treasurer's office.

The county has also partnered with other agencies and empowered department heads with handling travel resolutions and strategic planning.

In addition, the Planning and Zoning Board received eight applicants for four spots,

resulting in the selection of four new members.

In terms of issues in progress, Woods mentioned the proposed rail authority and the negotiations with Dakota Plains on a large-scale grain handling facility at Napa Junction.

Other projects under way include a comprehensive ordinance review with District III, work on the Highway 52 corridor, strategic planning for departments and the creation of a county seal.

Upcoming goals include a Napa Junction industrial park, the creation of a county manager/human resources officer, a Highway 52 sewer district, cell tower development, strengthening partnerships with other entities and more education of citizens on a number of complex issues.

Woods encouraged Tuesday's luncheon audience to become involved with local government and to encourage others to do the same.

In addition, he encouraged Yankton County citizens to spread the word about the local quality of life. He places the recruitment of more residents as a goal, which in turn can expand the tax base.

"We need to put out the welcome mat. Yankton is a great place, and we need to promote that," he said.

"What else do we need? We need a can-do attitude. The can-do attitude will put out that welcome mat."

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