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E-ALERT is compiled based on an email service we receive from the Department of State's Office of International Information Programs. We are sending it to you to alert you of the latest issues and debates in the United States.

It covers (1) U.S. Federal government documents, especially those from executive branch departments and those from the Congressional branch - - Committees, the U.S. General Accounting Office, and the Congressional Budget Office; (2) policy briefs from major private think tanks, especially those in Washington; and (3) major reports from national professional associations. A few new high quality, high relevance think tank-sponsored books are also listed.

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### **Reports**

[Item#1](#)  
Aviation Security: After Four Decades, It's Time for a Fundamental Review. RAND Corporation. Brian Michael Jenkins. August 29, 2012.

While security budgets shrink, passenger loads grow, and hostility towards security procedures increases, terrorist groups such as al Qaeda remain obsessed with attacking airplanes. In the face of these challenges and real, innovative threats, the author proposes a mechanism for conducting an

independent re-examination of the strategy behind current aviation security policies and procedures -- before disaster strikes.

*[Note: contains copyrighted material].*

[http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/occasional\\_papers/2012/RAND\\_OP390.pdf](http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/occasional_papers/2012/RAND_OP390.pdf) [PDF format, 12 pages, 0.2 MB].

#### Item#2

Avoiding Creeping Defeat in Afghanistan: The Need for Realistic Assumptions, Strategy, and Plans. Center for Strategic & International Studies. Anthony H. Cordesman. August 28, 2012.

The U.S. is not losing the war in Afghanistan in the classic military sense. The U.S., its allies, and Afghan forces still win virtually every direct military encounter. The problem is that this is a political war where the political impact of combat, politics, governance, and economics are far more important than tactical success in directly defeating the enemy. At this level, the insurgents still seem to have significant momentum and are certainly not being decisively defeated.

*[Note: contains copyrighted material].*

[http://csis.org/files/publication/120828\\_Avoiding\\_Creeping\\_Defeat\\_Afghanistan.pdf](http://csis.org/files/publication/120828_Avoiding_Creeping_Defeat_Afghanistan.pdf) [PDF format, 17 pages, 542.49 KB].

#### Item#3

Health Insurance Exchanges Under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA). Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress. Bernadette Fernandez and Annie L. Mach. August 15, 2012.

The fundamental purpose of a health insurance exchange is to provide a structured marketplace for the sale and purchase of health insurance. The authority and responsibilities of an exchange may vary, depending on statutory or other requirements for its establishment and structure. The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA, P.L. 111-148, as amended) requires health insurance exchanges to be established in every state by January 1, 2014. ACA provides certain requirements for the establishment of exchanges, while leaving other choices to be made by the states.

<https://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R42663.pdf> [PDF format, 36 pages, 423.17 KB].

#### Item#4

More Interest in GOP Platform than Romney's Speech. Pew Research Center for the People & the Press. August 27, 2012.

As the Republican convention gets underway, more Americans express interest in learning about what's in the GOP platform than in the speeches by either Mitt Romney or his running mate. About half of the public (52%) is interested in learning about the Republican Party's platform, while 44% are interested in Romney's acceptance speech and about the same percentage (46%) in Ryan's convention speech.

*[Note: contains copyrighted material].*

<http://www.people-press.org/files/legacy-pdf/8-27-12%20Conventions%20Release.pdf> [PDF format, 17 pages, 224.75 KB].

#### Item#5

An Overview of the "Patent Trolls" Debate. Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress. Brian T. Yeh. August 20, 2012.

Congress has recently demonstrated significant ongoing interest in litigation by "patent assertion entities" (PAEs), which are colloquially known as "patent trolls" and sometimes referred to as "non-practicing entities" (NPEs). The PAE business model focuses not on developing or commercializing patented inventions but on buying and asserting patents, often against firms that have already begun using the claimed technology after developing it independently, unaware of the PAE patent. PAEs include not only freestanding businesses but patent holding subsidiaries, affiliates, and shells of operating companies that want to participate in the PAE industry and/or a new means of countering competitors.

<https://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R42668.pdf> [PDF format, 23 pages, 317.4 KB].

#### Item#6

Paul Ryan in a Word: 'Conservative,' 'Intelligent.' Pew Research Center for the People & the Press. August 29, 2012.

As Paul Ryan prepares to accept his nomination as the GOP's vice presidential candidate, the American public has a mixed impression of him. When asked what one word comes to mind when thinking about Ryan, the most frequent responses are *conservative*, *intelligent*, *good*, *unknown*, and *young*.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

<http://www.people-press.org/2012/08/29/paul-ryan-in-a-word-conservative-intelligent/> [HTML format, various paging].

#### Item#7

Prospects for Shale Gas Development in Asia: Examining Potentials and Challenges in China and India. Center for Strategic & International Studies. Jane Nakano et al. August 28, 2012.

The development of unconventional gas resources, especially shale gas, in China and India warrants close observation because of the potential economic and energy security benefits that successful development could bring to the two nations. An April 2011 assessment of international shale gas resources by the U.S. Energy Information Administration cited technically recoverable shale gas resources (*not* reserves) in China at 1,275 trillion cubic feet (tcf) and in India at 63 tcf, compared with 1,250 tcf for the United States and Canada combined. China and India have already begun exploring their substantial indigenous shale gas resources, but the question of how well they can replicate the U.S. experience still looms large. The geological characteristics of shale deposits can vary widely, affecting the potential production profiles.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

[http://csis.org/files/publication/120824\\_Nakano\\_ProspectsShaleGas\\_Web.pdf](http://csis.org/files/publication/120824_Nakano_ProspectsShaleGas_Web.pdf) [PDF format, 44 pages, 860.64 KB].

#### Item#8

Why Some Fuel-Efficient Vehicles Are Not Sold Domestically. Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress. Bill Canis. August 17, 2012.

There is nothing in U.S. emissions or fuel economy regulations that prevents automakers from marketing high-efficiency diesel cars in the United States. Volkswagen and others already offer a few models domestically. To meet U.S. emissions standards, however, automakers have to modify their EU-certified diesel engines. Where a manufacturer sees large demand for diesel vehicles in the United States, it is free to do so. However, the U.S. market for diesels is very small. Most Americans have shunned this technology because of some adverse experiences with diesel engines more than 30 years ago, as the European Automobile Manufacturers' Association noted. Current diesel engine technology has changed markedly since then, but there appears to be a lingering bias against such vehicles by U.S. consumers, reinforced by the fact that, unlike in Europe, in the United States, diesel fuel is more expensive than gasoline.

<https://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R42666.pdf> [PDF format, 7 pages, 263.15 KB].