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January 2013



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[Fiscal cliff bill](#)  
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A letter signed by [180 economists opposed to tax increases](#) as part of a fiscal cliff deal was delivered to Congress on December 11. The letter

## New Year, New Congress

Washington is again abuzz with activity. It's difficult, but we are trying to remain optimistic that this year will bring a renewed dedication to effective government action in Washington. Our signals that it will be a productive year? We were relieved to see a few [Democrats vote against the fiscal cliff agreement](#). We also were relieved that some Republicans voted against the Republican proposals. This is the only way legislation can pass. We need to celebrate those members of Congress who are courageous enough to vote in support of their beliefs!

There is (almost) nothing we like more than members of Congress who cross party lines...It doesn't matter the issue or whether we agree with it or not!

Now we need more women appointed to the Cabinet!

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## Gun Fight on Capitol Hill

**By Scott Orr**

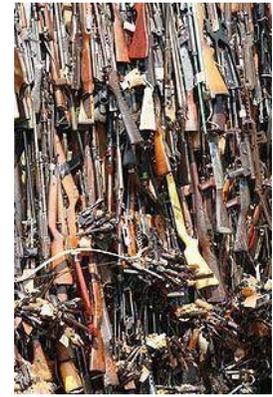
Last week, the children of Sandy Hook Elementary School returned to classes for the first time since that awful day in December when a gunman stormed their school and claimed 26 lives. On the same day, the 113th Congress was sworn in.

What happened in Newtown, Conn., is reverberating in Washington, giving new impetus to efforts to tighten federal gun laws. Hearings are on the way, but first up will be [legislation to ban large ammunition feeders](#) like

argues that hiking tax rates would have a 'significant, negative impact on the economy'.

Hereditary Cancer Research - a call for support. [Click here to get involved.](#)

[Click here to view the December 2012 jobs report as released by the Department of Labor.](#)



the one used in the Connecticut massacre.

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## Takeaways From the Fiscal Cliff

**By Carl Chancellor**

Phew - that was way too close for comfort. But thanks to a nail-biter of a [New Year's deal](#), we barely averted a package of draconian automatic spending cuts and tax increases that no one wanted to endure.



However, to claim that we avoided going over the so-called "fiscal cliff" would be to overstate the outcome of the more than two months of rancorous partisan wrangling leading up to a last minute, down-to-the-wire agreement that did little to address our fiscal predicament. Instead of avoiding the fiscal cliff, we simply sidestepped and postponed the pending calamity.

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## New Congress, Same Dysfunction

**By Scott Orr**

Congress' approval rating, how low can it go?

The 113th Congress was sworn in last week with 90 percent of the membership and 100 percent of the partisanship returning for another term. Don't these folks realize that they are not sent to Washington to do politics? Don't they know they are sent to govern?



Okay, so the 112th Congress adjourned to the history books with an 11th hour vote to avoid the fiscal cliff, the overused term for a series of tax hikes and budget cuts that would have sent the economy tumbling into free fall.

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