



## **Comeback America Initiative**

### **“\$10 Million A Minute Bus Tour”**

#### **Highlights & Results**

##### **Tour Purpose**

The 2012 presidential campaigns provided too much spin and not enough substance and solutions. In contrast, the \$10 Million A Minute Tour sought to educate and activate voters in a fact based, non-partisan and non-ideological manner so the related issues of the economy, jobs and fiscal responsibility was made a top priority by which they cast an informed vote on Election Day.

In doing so, we sought to prove that the American people...

...are smarter than most politicians think

...know we have a serious fiscal problem

...are disgusted with the current state of political affairs in Washington, D.C.

...can handle the truth about our nation's current and projected finances, and

...will accept tough choices if they are part of a comprehensive plan that they deem to be fair.

*All of the above were proven to be true*

##### **Where We Went**

Over 34 days we traveled almost 10,000 miles through 27 states & Washington, D.C., holding events at major colleges and universities and community venues. We spoke with students, business leaders and community organizations. More than 30 events were held in 16 states, including all 9 key swing states in the presidential election. (See attached full listing of tour destinations and events).

## What We Discussed

- A) The non-partisan facts about our country's fiscal situation and the tough choices that must be made. (Attendees viewed a PowerPoint presentation at all tour events, which can be found at <http://keepingamericagreat.org/10-million-a-minute-tour/tour-results/>)
- B) The key principles and values that should guide a "grand bargain". Any proposed fiscal reform should meet ALL six criteria:
- 1) Pro-Growth
  - 2) Socially Equitable
  - 3) Culturally Acceptable
  - 4) Mathematically Accurate
  - 5) Politically Feasible
  - 6) Able to Gain Meaningful Bipartisan Support
- C) A range of illustrative and non-partisan solutions that meet all of the above criteria. (All attendees were asked to express their views of these reforms by a show of hands at tour events. The illustrative solutions are also in the PowerPoint presentation, which can be found at <http://keepingamericagreat.org/10-million-a-minute-tour/tour-results/>)

### Two Special Town Hall Events

To prove that the issues and proposed solutions would be supported by a broad cross section of voters in swing states we held two special town hall events that brought together a representative sample of registered voters. *America Speaks* recruited hundreds of participants for events in Strongsville, OH (9/15) and Springfield, VA (10/6), whereby attendees used electronic keypad polling to express their views on our country's fiscal situation, their level of support for the key principles and values, as well as their opinion on a range of reform options discussed throughout the tour.

## Findings & Results

The following are the key findings from the tour, including the percentage responses from the registered voter samples at the special town hall events in Ohio and Virginia (Full town hall results can be found at <http://keepingamericagreat.org/10-million-a-minute-tour/tour-results/>). The results from the town halls in Ohio & Virginia are reflective of the response from the cumulative thousands that attended the bus tour events.

### *Voters Know We Have a Serious Problem and Know it Should Be a Top Priority*

- 97% said that our nation's fiscal and debt challenges are serious
- 97% feel strongly that addressing our fiscal challenges should be a top priority for the nation

### ***Everything Must Be On the Table***

- 85% said that solving the nation's deficit and debt problems will require a **combination of spending cuts and tax increases**
- 92% believe the six principles for reform are a reasonable approach by which to measure any proposed fiscal reform

### ***In Contrast to Partisan Rhetoric on Both Sides, Voters do Support a Range of Solutions***

- 81% support reforming the Tax Code (both individual and corporate) to make taxes simpler and fairer while also increasing tax revenue (81% supported package of tax reforms)
- 72% support a budget limit on federal Medicare and Medicaid spending (79% supported package of Medicare and Medicaid reforms)
- 86% support reducing defense spending in a way that does not compromise our national security (83% supported package of defense reforms)
- 68% support the government providing some level of health care coverage for all citizens (79% supported a package of health care reforms)
- 64% support making Social Security solvent through a combination of raising taxes and reducing benefits (77% supported package of Social Security reforms)
- 95% agree that Congress should be required to pass detailed budget and spending bills on time (90% supported package of budget reforms)
- 82% support transforming government by implementing a government wide strategic plan and creating a Government Transformation Task Force
- **Unanimous agreement** by voters that our political system is broken and dysfunctional, with 78% support for package of political reforms

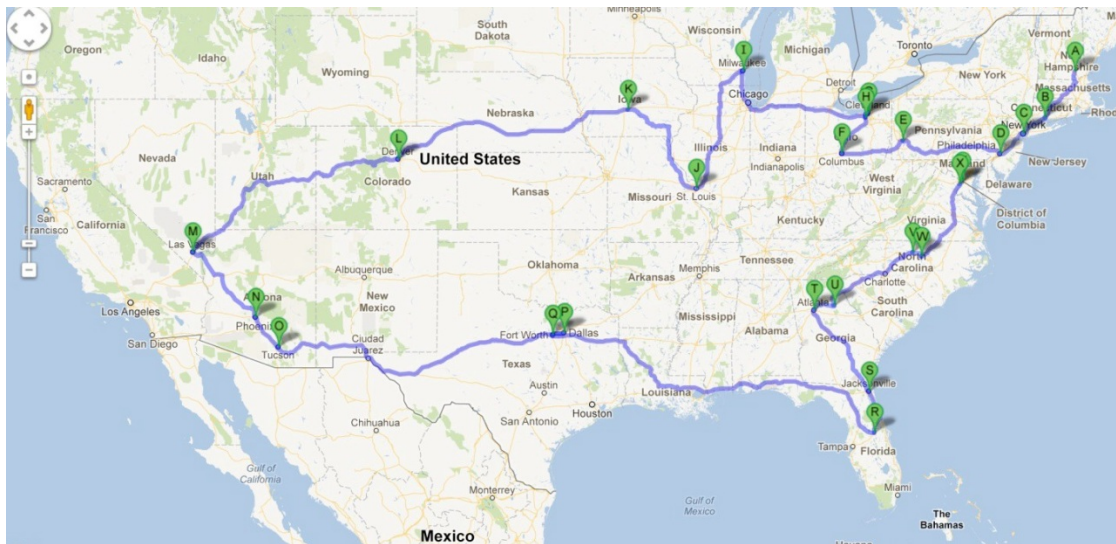
### ***Tour Will Impact Voters' Decisions, but there is no Confidence in Congress' Ability to Act in 2013***

- 77% of voters in VA and 59% of voters in Ohio said that based on what they learned at the event fiscal and debt issues will be more significant in determining their vote
- 56% of voters' views were changed based on what they learned at the event
- Only 8% are confident that Congress can adopt a bipartisan solution to the nation's fiscal crisis in 2013

## About the Comeback America Initiative

CAI is a non-profit organization that promotes fiscal responsibility and sustainability by engaging the public and assisting key policymakers on a non-partisan basis in order to achieve solutions to America's fiscal imbalances.

## \$10 Million-a-Minute Tour Destinations & Events



From September 7 to October 10, the tour traveled through 27 states & Washington, D.C., holding over 30 events in 16 states including all key swing states:

**New Hampshire** (St. Anselm College)

**Connecticut** (Yale University)

**New York** (The Economic Club of New York)

**Pennsylvania** (Temple University, University of Pennsylvania, Pittsburgh Rotary Club & Carnegie Mellon University)

**Ohio** (Ohio State University, Ernst & Young Cleveland Business and Community Leader Event, Strongsville Special Town Hall)

**Wisconsin** (Waukesha County Technical College)

**Missouri** (Washington University)

**Iowa** (Drake University)

**Colorado** (Colorado Concern, Denver Chamber of Commerce, Colorado Society of CPA's, and University of Denver)

**Nevada** (Business and Community Leader briefing in Las Vegas)

**Arizona** (Gen Next & Arizona Chamber of Commerce, Arizona State University, University of Arizona)

**Texas** (Business Executives for National Security, University of Texas at Dallas, Richardson Central Rotary Club, National Center for Policy Analysis, Texas Christian University)

**Florida** (Orlando Regional Chamber of Commerce, Jacksonville University, University of North Florida, Jacksonville Chamber of Commerce and Leadership Florida)

**Georgia** (King & Spalding Business and Community Leader Event, University of Georgia)

**North Carolina** (Elon University, North Carolina Chamber of Commerce, University of North Carolina, and the North Carolina Association of CPAs)

**Virginia** (Springfield Special Town Hall, University of Richmond, George Mason University)

**Washington, D.C.** (American University, National Press Club)

## **Impact of \$10 Million a Minute Tour: Summary of Event Attendance, Media Coverage, and Online Activity**

The major purpose of the tour was to ensure that voters made the related issues of the economy, jobs and fiscal responsibility a top priority by which they cast an informed vote on Election Day. Of course measuring the success of this purpose is difficult to quantify, thus other measures are relied upon to determine the tour's impact, including estimates of how many people were reached with the tour's message through event attendance, media coverage, and online activity. This document serves as a supplement to the Tour Results document, and focuses more on the messaging impact rather than the many purposes of the tour and hypotheses that were proven true.

It is estimated that the message of the \$10 Million a Minute Tour was able to reach millions of people through the tour events and related media coverage. Exact numbers are impossible to estimate, but using known media audience and circulation amounts, it is possible the message was received by upwards of more than 10 million. Based on numbers for viewers and listeners of the specific television and radio programs mentioning the tour, the message reached over 5.8 million people. There was also a spike in online traffic during the tour, helping broaden the reach of the Comeback America Initiative (CAI) and its other publications and materials.

It is worth noting that for the people we did reach throughout the tour, it is highly likely the message was positively received. Importantly, the electronic polling at the representative town hall meetings in Ohio and Virginia revealed that a majority of attendees would make fiscal and debt issues more significant in determining their vote (77% OH; 59% VA), and that the information learned that day changed their point of view (54% OH; 55% VA).

### **Event Attendance**

Over 4,000 people attended the tour events, and some events attracted large crowds.

The top five events in terms of attendance:

- The University of Denver: 500
- Waukesha County Technical College: 300
- NC CPAs/UNC: 300
- Texas Christian University: 250
- Drake University: 250

### **Media Coverage**

The tour received extensive media coverage by both national and local press, with a total of 119 media hits. All cities on the tour were covered by more than one media outlet and at least two different mediums (See attached full listing of media coverage).

The media highlights include:

- Anderson Cooper 360
  - Audience: 684,000
- Morning Joe
  - Audience: 573,000
- 2 USA Today articles with Ross Perot, one of which was on the front page
  - Circulation: 1,817,446
- American Urban Radio Network
  - Audience: 2,930,000
- Philadelphia Inquirer
  - Circulation: 325,291
- Milwaukee Journal Sentinel
  - Circulation: 384,539
- Denver Post
  - Circulation: 401,120
- Dallas Morning News
  - Circulation: 405,349

Listing of all known and verified media hits and audience size/circulation, if available

Print & Online: 74 total hits

USA Today (2): 1,817,446

Real Clear Politics

Journal of Accountancy

Money News (2)

Washington Post/Post Partisan

LA Times: 572,998

Daily Paul (2)

Random Thoughts Blog

Jim Sinclair's MineSet

City Data

FedSmith

TownHall.com

Huffington Post

Charleston Gazette: 40,671

Herald Online (York, Lancaster, PA)

San Francisco Luxury News

Manchester Union Leader (2): 45,536

New Haven Register: 89,022

Litchfield County Times

Above Average Jane  
Philadelphia Inquirer (2): 325,291  
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette (3): 173,160  
Columbus Dispatch (3): 199,524  
Akron Beacon Journal: 87,780  
Strongsville Sun-Courier (2)  
Patch.com  
Cleveland Plain-Dealer (3): 271,180  
Toledo Blade: 119,901  
Lakewood Patch  
Strongsville Post newspapers  
Milwaukee Journal Sentinel (5): 384,539  
Wisconsin Rapids Tribune  
Waukesha Patch  
Des Moines Register (3): 101,151  
Belleville News Democrat  
St. Louis Post Dispatch: 191,631  
WUSTL student paper: Student Life  
Show Me Progress  
St. Louis Beacon  
Denver Post (2): 401,120  
Phoenix Business Journal  
Arizona Daily Wildcat  
Dallas Morning News: 405,349  
Fort Worth Star Telegram: 151,753  
Florida Times Union: 155,590  
Wave Weekly  
Atlanta Business Chronicle  
Georgia Public Policy Foundation  
Daily Tar Heel  
Elon News Bureau  
Washington Post/Ezra Klein's Wonkblog  
Washington Examiner: 100,000  
Red Alert Politics  
Digby  
George Mason University

Television: 16 total hits

Anderson Cooper 360: 684,000  
Morning Joe: 573,000

Bloomberg Street Smart  
ABC/Yahoo  
Cavuto  
CSPAN  
Money Matters Boston  
WMUR  
Manchester Public TV  
Bloomberg TV  
Newson6  
Iowa Public Television  
Missourinet  
KTVI  
Action News Jacksonville  
WJCT FM/TV

Radio: 29 total hits

Sirius/XM POTUS  
American Urban Radio Network: 2,930,000  
Take Action News with Schuster: 10,500  
The Lars Larson Show: 150,000  
WGIR  
WRKO  
WTIC (2): 26,400  
Radio Pennsylvania: 129,900  
WRTI-FM: 17,600  
KQV-AM: 5,000  
Ohio Public Radio: 109,100  
Ohio News Connection: 50,700  
Ohio News Network: 109,100  
WHK-AM: 3,000  
WKSU-FM: 12,200  
Public Radio Net: 69,400  
WHO-AM (2): 22,800  
St. Louis Public Radio  
KMOX-AM: 35,100  
KYSL-FM: 1,000  
KFYI-AM: 33,700  
Dallas Metro Networks: 382,700  
KSKY-AM: 6,000  
Florida Radio Network: 205,700



WPTF-AM: 15,500

DC Metro Networks: 245,900

WOIC-AM: 4,400

## **Online Traffic**

Visits to CAI's website, Facebook page likes, and Twitter followers all increased during the duration of the tour; undoubtedly this was caused by the tour itself.

- CAI's website
  - 78% increase in new visits compared to before tour announcement
  - 31,191 visits between the dates of Sep. 7 and Oct. 10 for a total of 75,943 page views.
  - The \$10 Million a Minute Tour page was visited 19,995 times, which was the most views of any page, even the home page.
  - 52% of visits were direct traffic, meaning that visitors typed [keepingamericagreat.org](http://keepingamericagreat.org) or [10millionamminute.com](http://10millionamminute.com) directly into their browser.
- CAI's Facebook page
  - 20% increase in Facebook likes compared to before the tour
  - 1,710 total page views between Sep. 7 and Oct. 10
  - Many Facebook posts have a wider reach that extends beyond only those people that actually "like" the CAI Facebook page. From Sep. 11 – 17 the content of CAI's Facebook page was seen by 7,040 people.
- CAI's Twitter
  - 18% increase in Twitter followers compared to before the tour