



## The Daily Dish

# SOTU Thoughts

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### **Eakinomics: SOTU Thoughts**

Tonight President Trump will give the State of the Union (SOTU) address to a joint session of Congress. Oddly enough, presidents often do not give the kind of SOTU that I'd like - a sterile, area-by-area summary of policy accomplishments and new proposals. I think it is safe to say we won't see that tonight, either.

With impeachment in the rear-view mirror (almost) and the Iowa caucus results in the books, tonight is the kickoff to President Trump's re-election campaign. Policy *will* get mentioned in the form of "promises kept" from his last campaign - building (some of) the wall, re-negotiating the North American Free Trade Agreement, confronting China, the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, rolling back the regulatory burden, and so forth. There will also be mention of those areas that represent unfinished business - prescription drug prices and infrastructure, most notably.

It is also possible that the president will (re)float an idea for his next term; another "middle-class tax cut" comes to mind. But by and large, the most valuable information to be gleaned tonight is what, and whom, the president will target. Which of the myriad tax increases proposed by candidates for the Democratic nomination will he oppose? Does he attack the Green New Deal or other climate proposals by the opposition and signal that this will be an important part of the campaign?

The president's style is to make everything personal, so it is just as important to listen for whom he chooses to attack. Where does he perceive the threats on the other side of the presidential race, and in Congress? Will he weigh in against the opposition in close Senate races?

I prefer the SOTU to be just that - a review of the state of public policy. More likely, we will learn a lot about the state of the race for president.