



# Tax-Exempt Bonds State-of-Play in Congress: Making the Most of Your DC Hill Visits

Alex Hecht – Executive Vice President  
ML Strategies



# ML Strategies, LLC

- ❑ **Bipartisan consulting firm retained by NAHEFFA to help defend tax-exempt bonds in tax reform**
- ❑ **Strong ties to House Ways & Means, Senate Finance, and House & Senate Leadership**
- ❑ **Work closely NAHEFFA's long-time general counsel Chuck Samuels**



**David J. Leiter**  
President - DC Office  
Chief of Staff to  
Democratic Senator on  
Finance Committee



**Alexander Hecht**  
Executive Vice President  
Chief Counsel to  
Republican Senator on  
Finance Committee



**Rodney Whitlock**  
Vice President  
Senior Policy Advisor to  
Senator Grassley and  
Senate Finance  
Committee



**Neal Martin**  
Sr. Manager, Government  
Relations  
Staffer to Democratic  
Senator

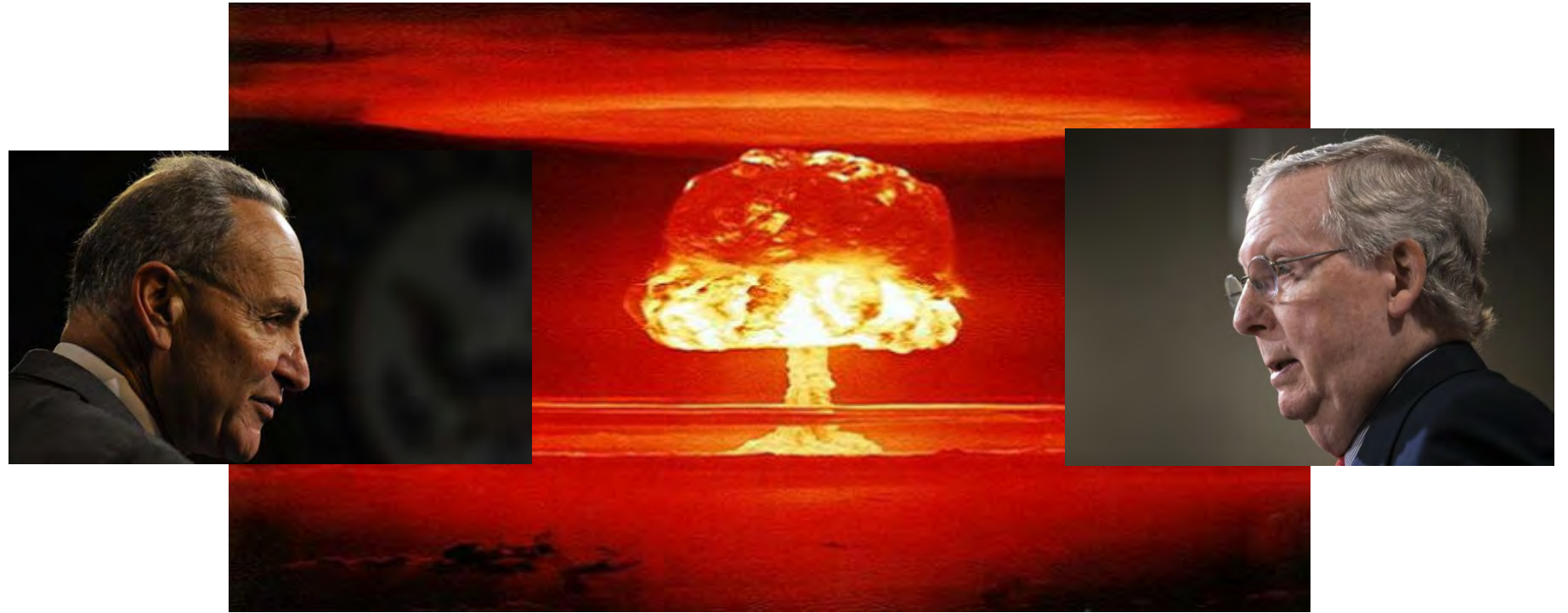
# Update on ML Strategies Activities for NAHEFFA

- **Drafted** and implemented a short- and long-term NAHEFFA advocacy strategy
- **Developed** advocacy/messaging materials for NAHEFFA and members
- **Ongoing** advocacy and engagement with House Ways & Means Committee and Senate Finance Committee on NAHEFFA's policy goals
- **Implemented** a *Call to Action on Tax Reform* to have NAHEFFA member authorities contact all footprint members of the House Ways & Means Committee and the Senate Finance Committee urging their support for tax-exempt municipal bonds
- **Supported** NAHEFFA members in effort to secure signatories to the Congressional Municipal Finance Caucus letter to Ways & Means Committee leadership urging support for tax-exempt municipal bonds in tax reform

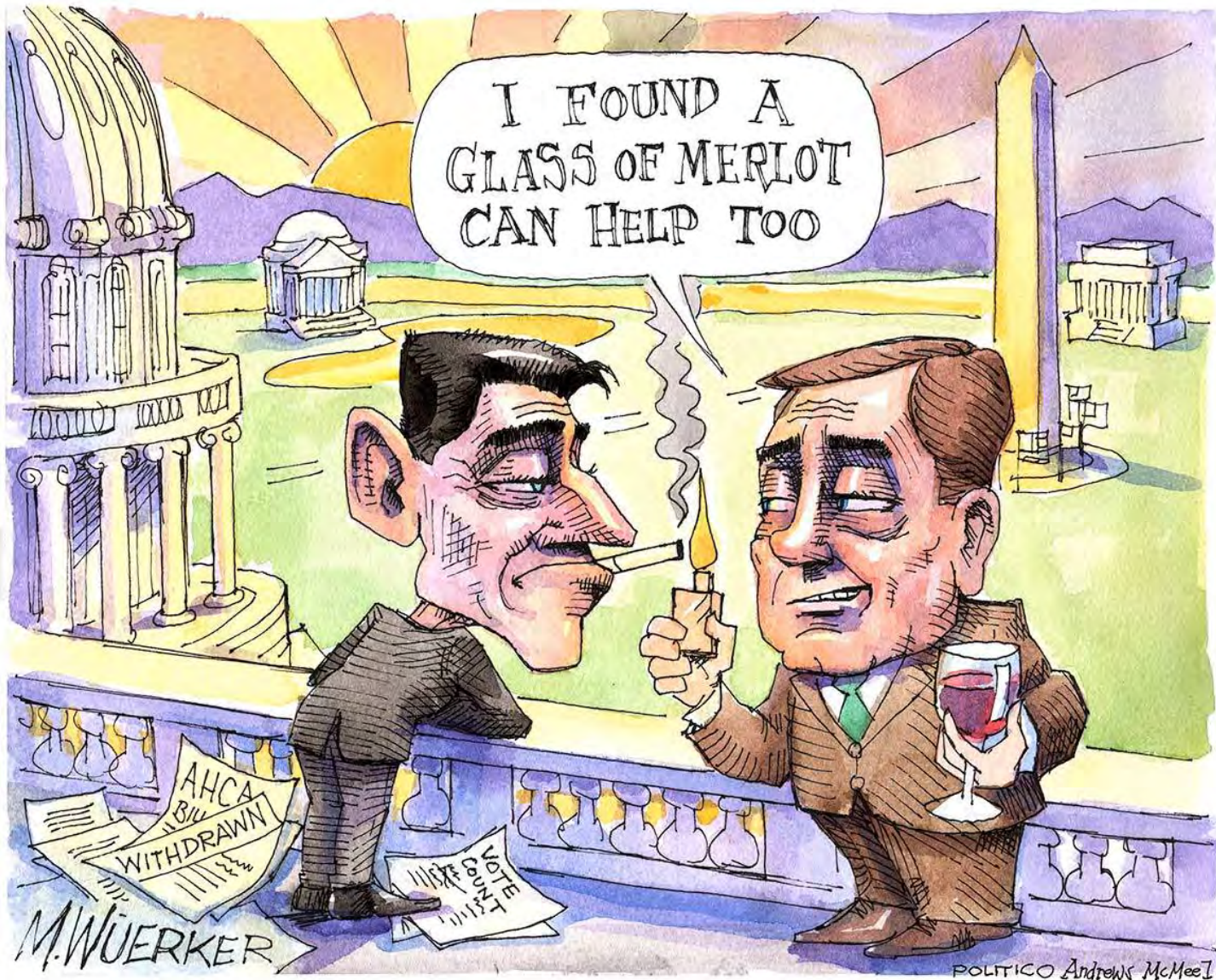
# Update on ML Strategies Activities for NAHEFFA (continued)

- **Coordinated** fly-ins with NAHEFFA President and Advocacy Chair
- **Gathered** intel from key decision-makers on Capitol Hill regarding tax reform and shared with the Advocacy Committee
- **Provided** strategic guidance to several individual NAHEFFA member authorities on tax reform
- **Assisted** NAHEFFA members with development of Spring Conference meeting material
- **Secured** congressional lobbying visits for NAHEFFA members during Spring Conference
- **Represented** NAHEFFA at stakeholder meetings in Washington, DC
  - Don't Mess With Our Bonds Coalition
  - Public Finance Network
  - Municipal Bonds for America

# **So What is the Senate Thinking This Week....?**



**And How about the U.S. House....?**





# KEY LOBBY VISIT OBJECTIVES

- **Educate** Members and staff on the value of TEBs
- **Highlight** state/district/local success stories
- **Encourage** Members to support maintaining tax treatment of TEBs
- **Listen** to what Members and staff tell you and report intel to Neal Martin at [RNMartin@mlstrategies.com](mailto:RNMartin@mlstrategies.com)



# QUIRKY HILL TERMS

LD, LA, LC



Legislative Director, Legislative Assistant, Legislative Correspondent; staff positions in Congressional offices in descending order of seniority

CLOTURE



For most bills in the Senate, the process by which a filibuster is overridden; 60 votes are needed

RECONCILIATION

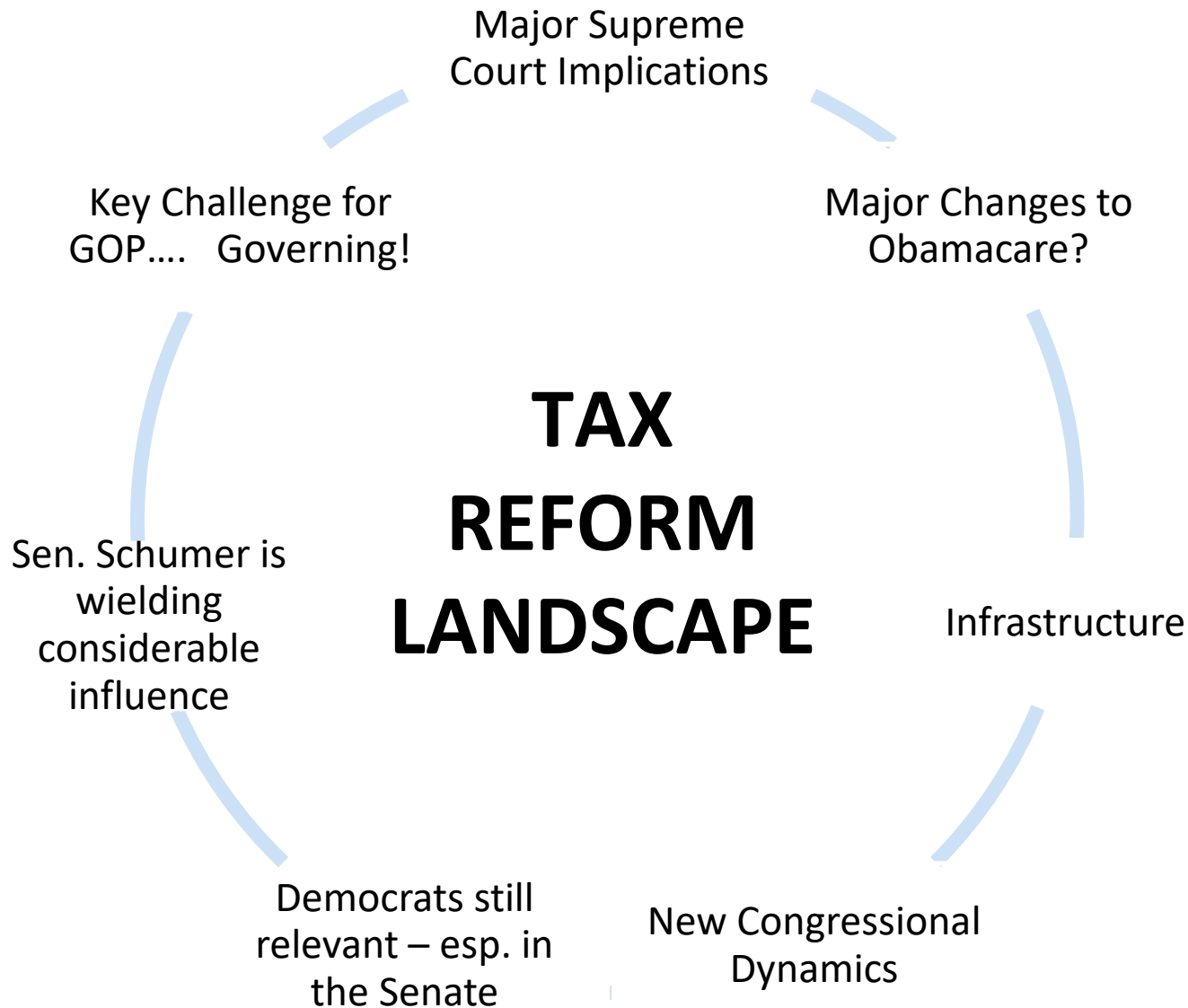


A process by which the Senate can pass filibuster-proof legislation (needing only 51 votes) through the budgeting process; ***This is the process by which the House and Senate appear likely to take up tax reform***

CHAIRMAN &  
RANKING MEMBER



The leaders of the majority and minority party, respectively, in committees and subcommittees



# TALKING POINTS

- **Tax exempt municipal bonds work!** They have helped state and local governments pay for the majority of our infrastructure for more than a century.
- **TEBs are extremely safe with a nearly zero default rate.**
- State and local governments build three-quarters of all public infrastructure in the U.S. and need the support of investors to finance critical infrastructure like hospitals and educational facilities.
- The federal government is able to **support billions of dollars of infrastructure in exchange for providing a small tax benefit**
- **Elimination or reduction of the exemption means that state and local governments will pay more to finance projects resulting in fewer projects – or a transfer of project costs to taxpayers**

# LOGISTICS

- Meet your group after lunch
- Depart for the Hill – find your own cab
- Allow at least 45 minutes for travel to DC and getting through building security
- Go to your first meeting – **You'll do great!**





# TYPICAL MEETING FLOW

- Arrival
- Introductions
- What is NAHEFFA? ***Who you are & Who you are not.....***
- Describe your Authority and work you do
- Describe your support for TEBs
- Explain why maintaining the TEB status is critical
- Ask if the Member or staff have any questions
- Listen for intel, strategic recommendations, and confirm next steps
- Wrap Up & Thank You



# ARRIVAL

- Before the meeting, designate one participant to start discussion
- When all members of your group are present, have one person go into the office and let the front desk know you are ready
- Have your business cards handy!
- You may or may not meet with the Member, but staff are just as important
- **REMEMBER** – You may not meet in an office. It is not uncommon to meet in hallways or other common areas





# INTRODUCTIONS

- Designated lead kicks it off
- Others introduce themselves
- **KEEP IT SIMPLE AND SHORT!**
- If meeting with a Member they could be called away – so get to the point quickly



# WHAT IS NAHEFFA?

- A pre-designated meeting participant should describe NAHEFFA
- Talk About Your Local Success Stories
  - Describe your Authority and the work you do in the state or district – highlighting financed projects and interest saved



# LEAVE TIME FOR QUESTIONS

- Ask if there are any questions
- If the Member or staff ask a question you don't know – DON'T ANSWER IT
- Let them know you'll get back to them



# WRAP UP & THANK YOU

- Thank the Member/staff for meeting
- Leave behind appropriate documents
- Review any follow up or action items
- Encourage the staff to utilize NAHEFFA and your authority if they have questions about TEBs and tax reform





## Questions?

Send a summary of your meeting notes to Neal Martin at

[RNMartin@mlstrategies.com](mailto:RNMartin@mlstrategies.com)