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1b: Project
Proposal

Political Pipeline

The Motivation:

The motivation for this project's idea is the need to cultivate the low information voter into into someone who can be an active contributor in a healthy democracy. There are many challenges we face in achieving this goal. One is that getting through all the noise of the main stream media is almost impossible. Another challenge is that social stigmas establish a culture of binary political allegiances, instead of people formulating their own opinions based on actually legislation.
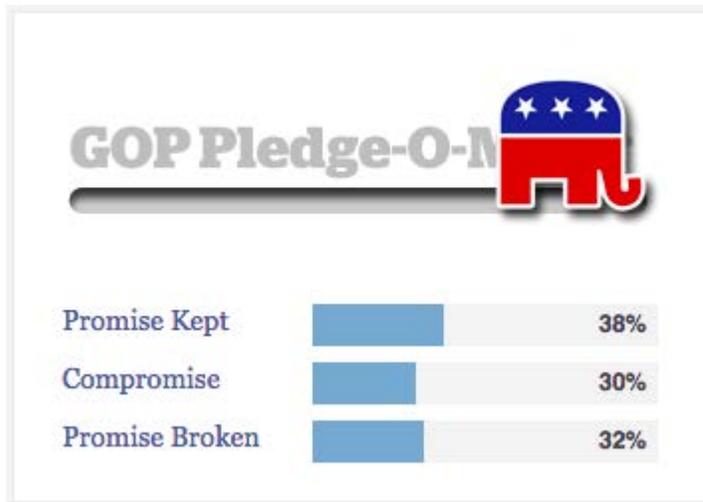

Figure 1: Icon for a kept promise for Barack Obama
Source:http://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/promises/

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Analysis of the problem:

Low information voters are a huge problem in our country because they allow for stale and corrupt governance. In the current landscape, politicians can seek heavy corporate endorsements to fund ad campaigns and win elections even though they may be a worse candidate than their competition. In addition, since it seems these days that elections are decided on anything but policy, a country with low information voters fosters a government wrought with stagnation and self interested career politicians. At middle of everything is the fact that learning about the key issues is hard, the key issues being items of legislation on the state and federal level. Bills can be whittled down to bullet point key issues that most anyone can look at and either agree with or disagree. I think if there were system in place that could provide a direct pipeline of bullet point information to a single endpoint that users could parse on their own time, then people could track their opinions on issues day in and day out in order to provide some introspection on their true political views. This appeals to the self tracking space because tracking how your opinions on individual issues align with the voting records of your state and federal politicians is a great way to learn about yourself, namely by sophisticating your political views away from being binary red or blue.