BROOKINGS

The Economic Outlook for the United States after the Election

Presentation to the Nomura Macroeconomic Conference

Tokyo, November 13, 2012

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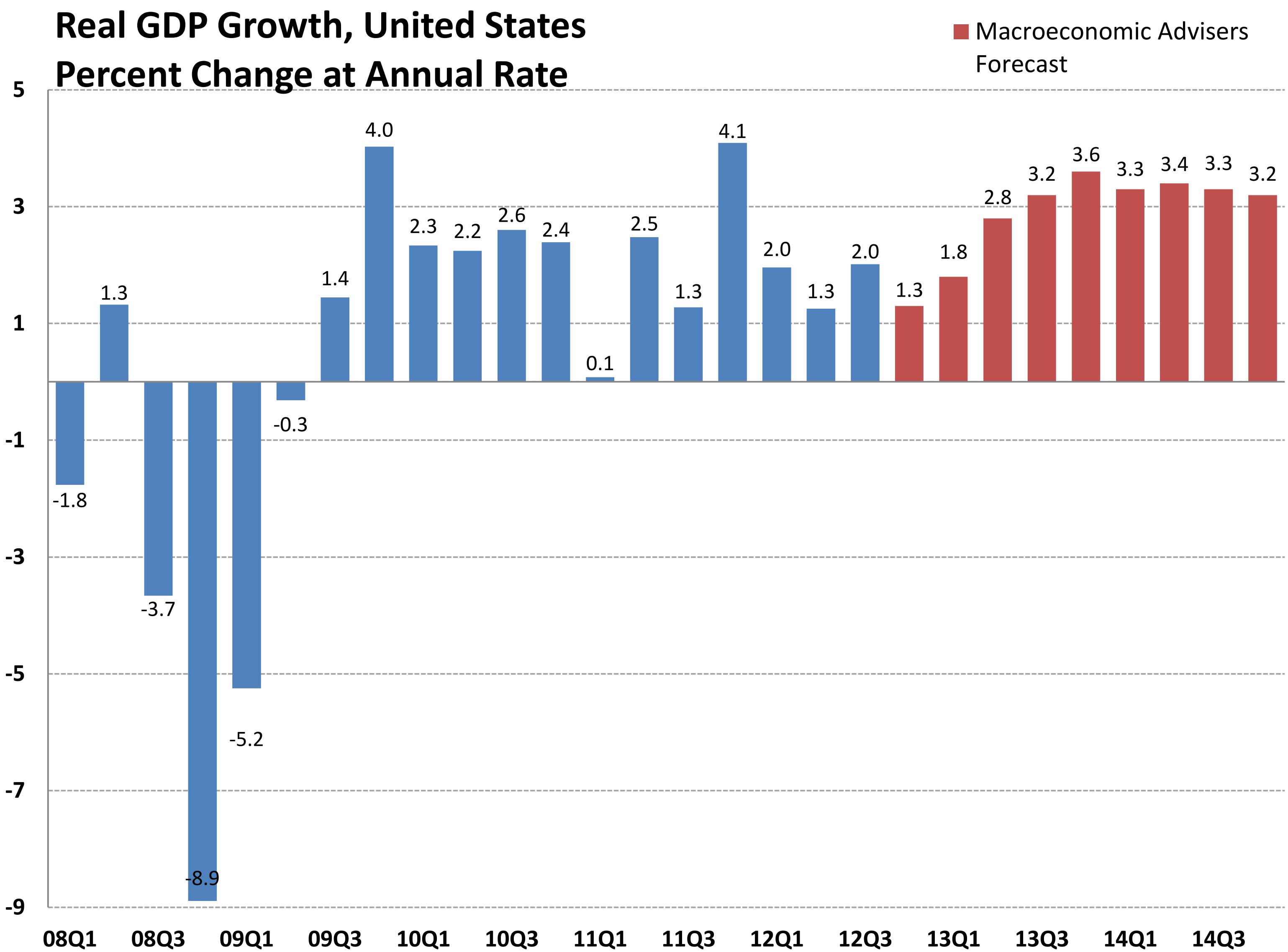
Brookings

US economic growth is sustained but slow. Macroeconomic Advisers forecast is optimistic but there are downside risks

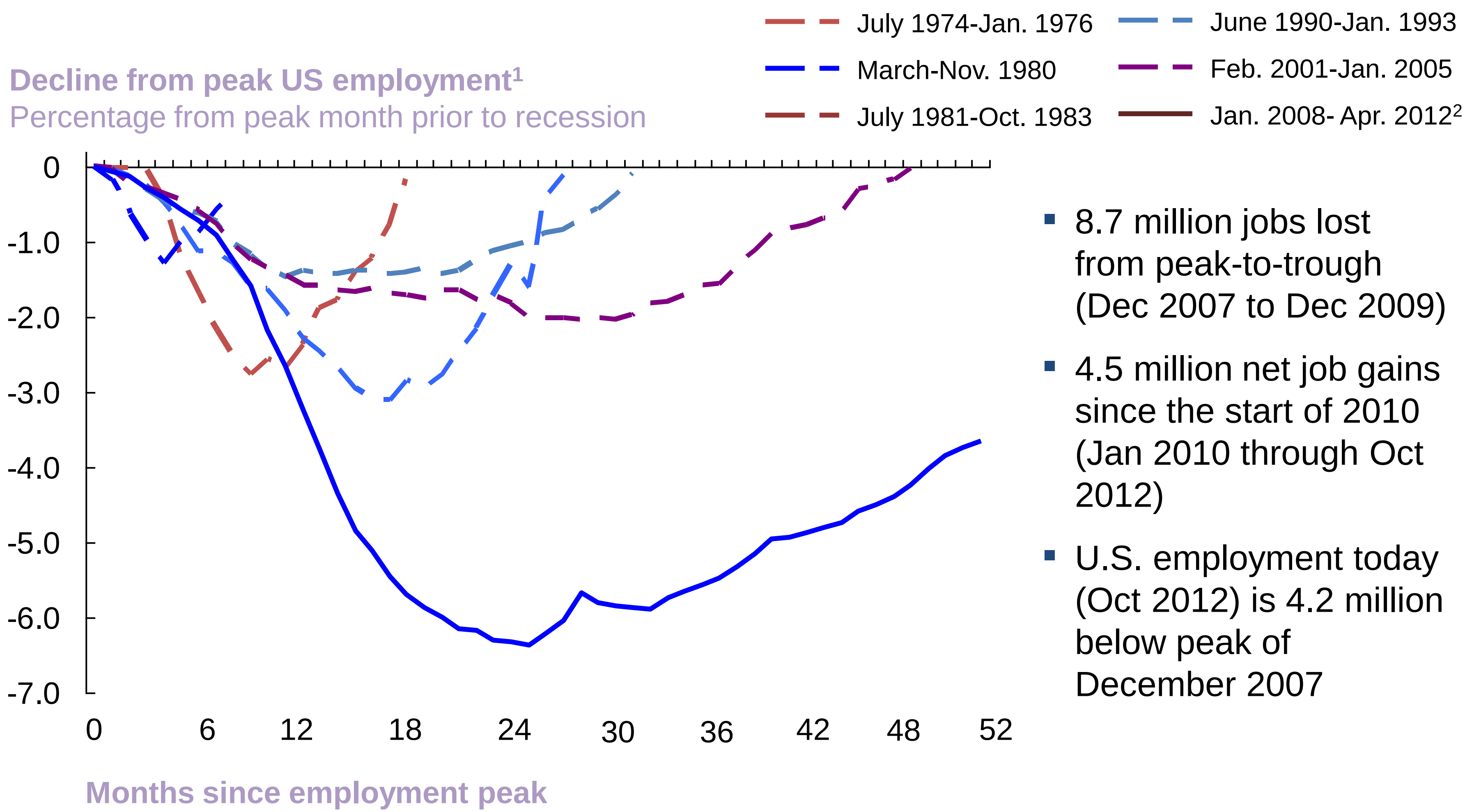


SOURCE: BEA, Macroeconomic Advisers (released 10/10/12)

Why is the US economy recovering? Why is the recovery so weak?

- Consumers are spending, housing starts and residential construction are growing.
- The recovery is slow because of the weakness in the labor market, reluctance to lend, the overhang of mortgage foreclosures and underwater mortgages, the weakness in government spending, business investment has flat-lined and exports are slowing.
- The recovery should continue this year and may strengthen next year. The biggest risks are a renewed crisis in Europe, a slowdown in China, an oil price spike, and the prospect of the fiscal cliff.
- Quantitative easing has caused concern about “monetary inflation”. However, inflation expectations remain contained, wage inflation is low and there is still slack in labor and product markets.

Huge employment decline. Job growth has been slow because GDP growth has been slow.

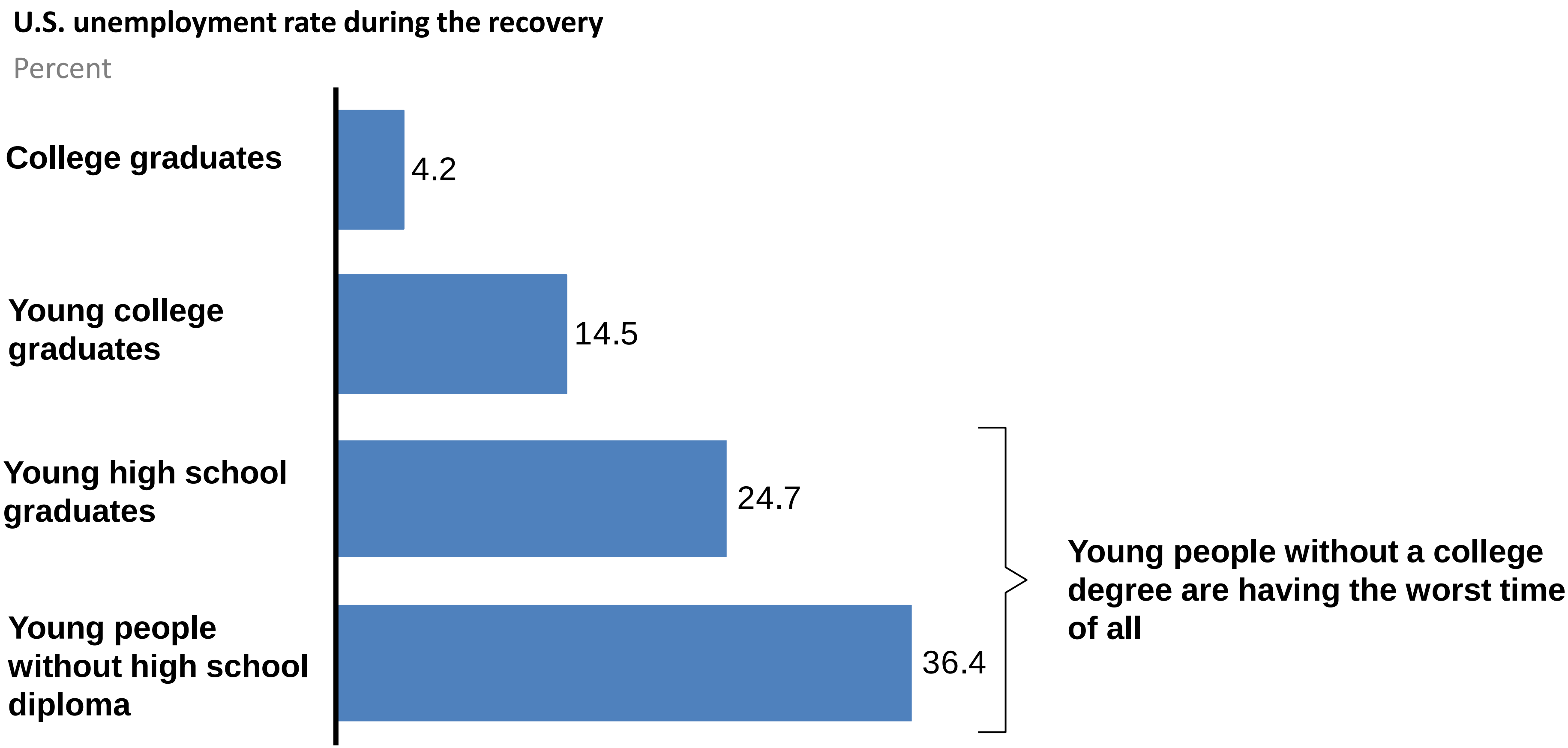


- 8.7 million jobs lost from peak-to-trough (Dec 2007 to Dec 2009)
- 4.5 million net job gains since the start of 2010 (Jan 2010 through Oct 2012)
- U.S. employment today (Oct 2012) is 4.2 million below peak of December 2007

1 Total non-farm employment, seasonally adjusted
2 Preliminary numbers subject to change

SOURCE: US Bureau of Labor Statistics

People with only a high school degree or less have been disproportionately hit

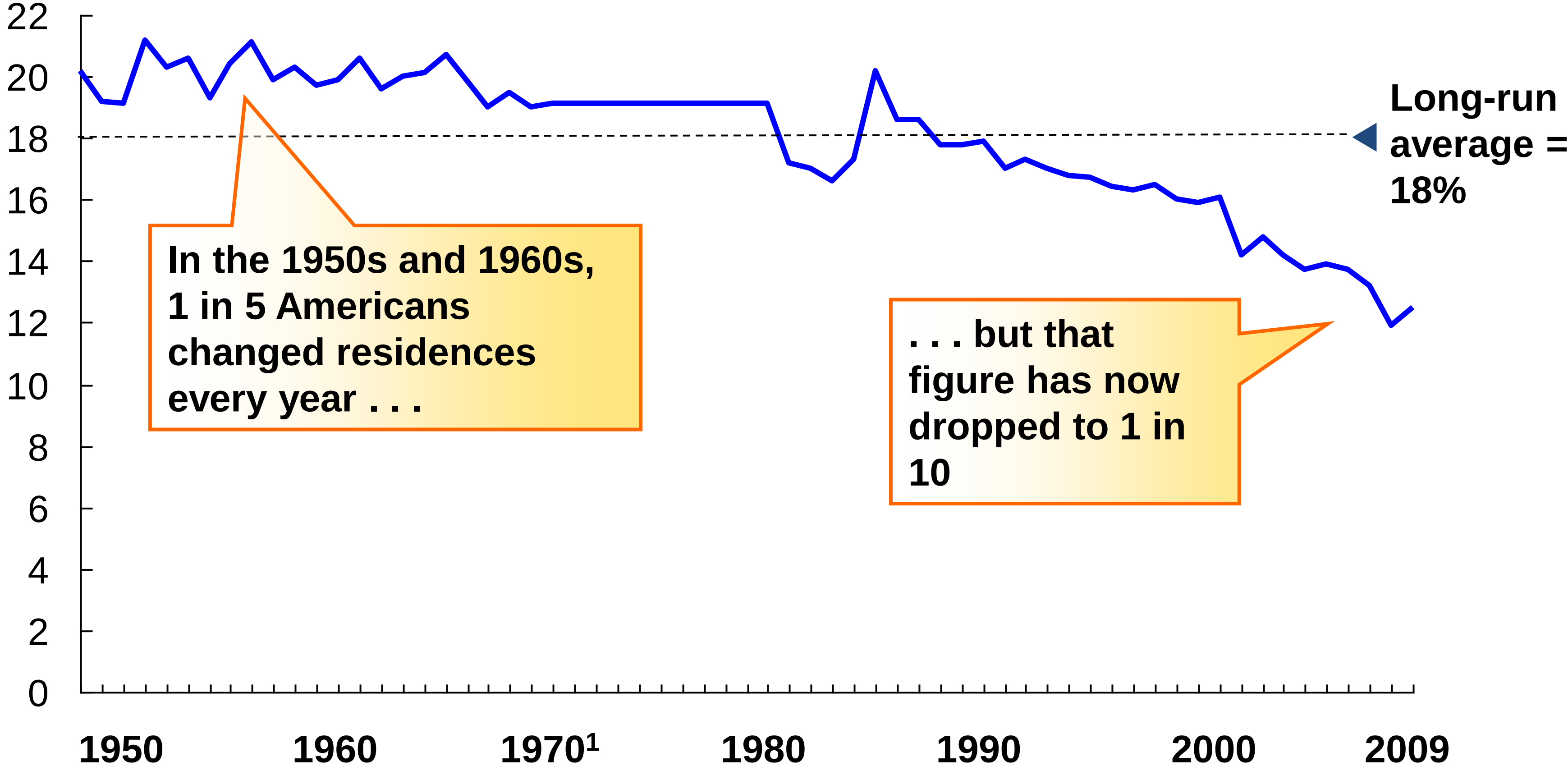


SOURCE: Bureau of Labor Statistics

Geographic mobility in the US has been declining since 1990 and is at a 50-year low

Annual domestic migration rate, 1948–2009

% of residents who have changed addresses during the past year



1 Data from 1970–1981 are interpolated due to data constraints.

SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics; McKinsey Global Institute analysis

Historically high-growth businesses are the lifeblood of job creation, but the level of startups remains depressed

High-growth businesses

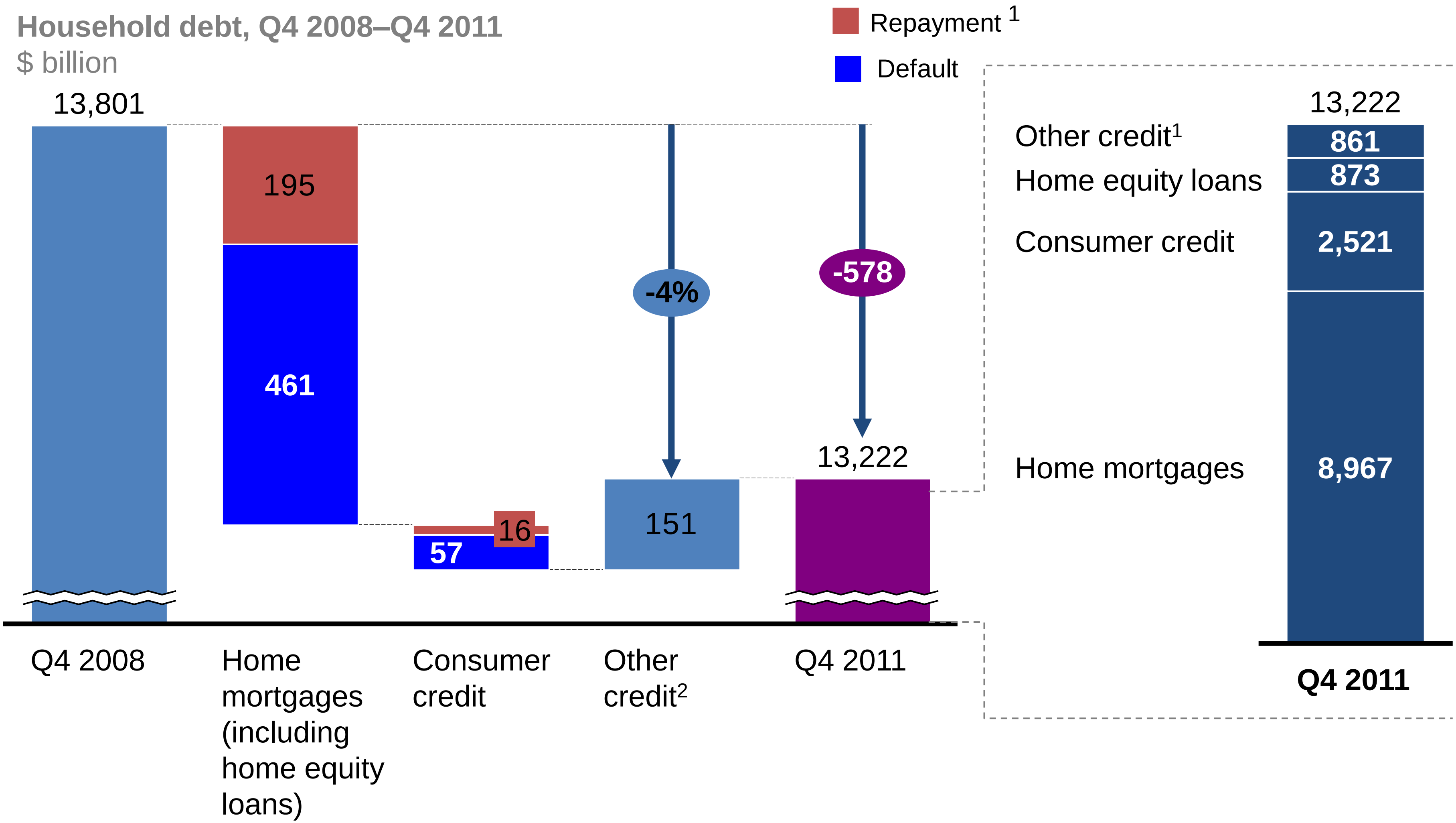
76% are "young" businesses

1% of firms generate ~40 % of net new jobs

88 net new jobs in any given year vs 2-3 for average firm

SOURCE: SBA, Kauffman Foundation

US household debt has fallen in absolute terms; two-thirds has been due to defaults

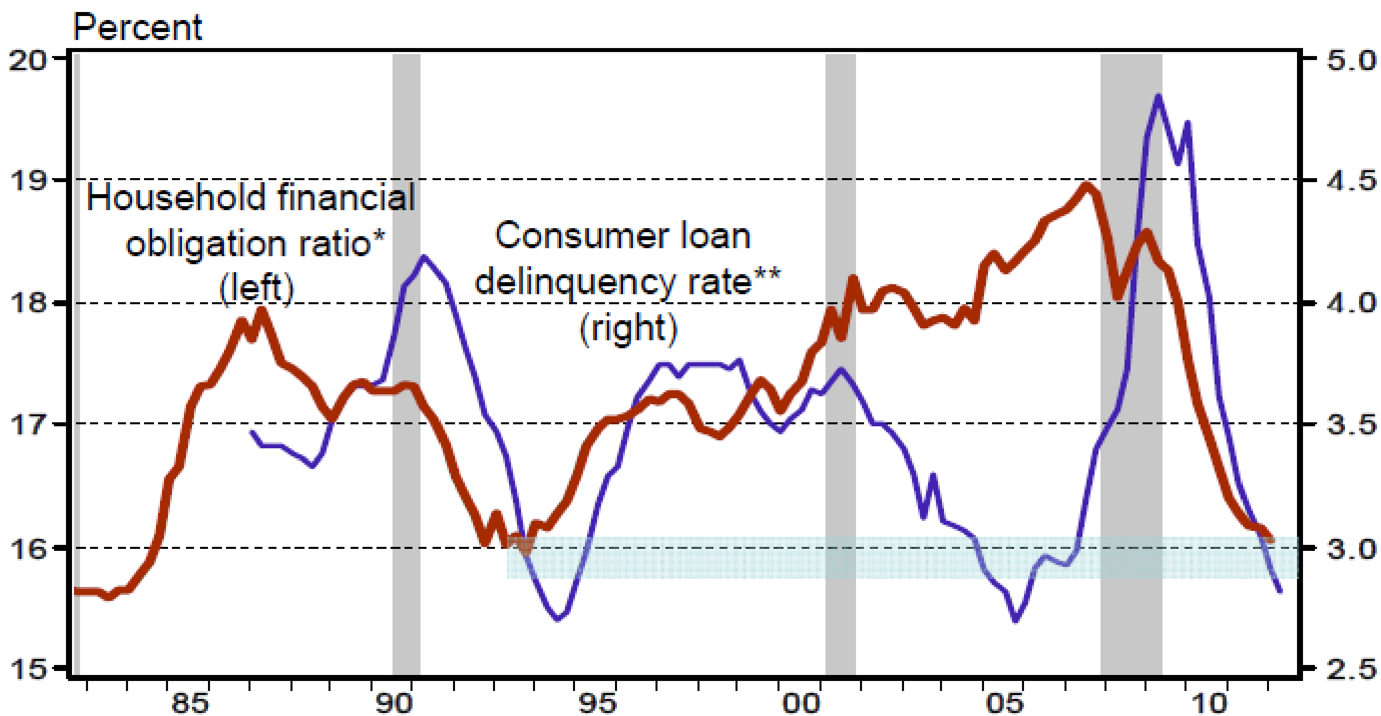


1 The share of decrease attributed to repayment vs. default is estimated using Q1 2011 data
2 “Other credit” comprises commercial mortgages, other bank loans, other loans and advances, and municipal securities.
NOTE: Numbers may not sum due to rounding.

SOURCE: US Federal Reserve; McKinsey Global Institute

Improving Financial Conditions

Households Reduce Financial Obligations



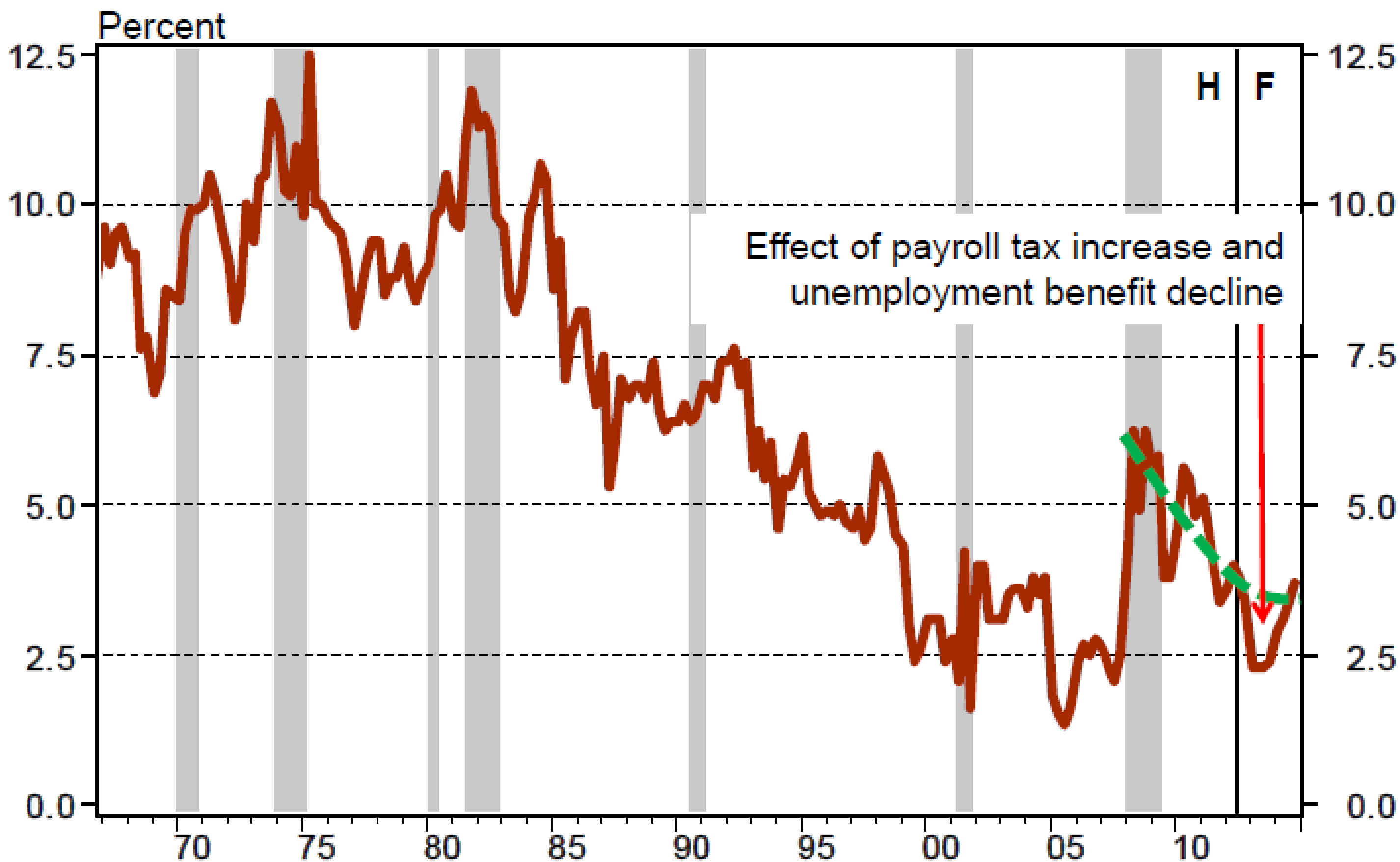
* The ratio of debt-service pmts, to disposable personal income, where debt-service includes estimated req'd pmts. on outstanding mortgage and consumer debt, plus auto lease pmts., rental pmts. on tenant-occupied property, homeowners' insurance, and property tax pmts.

** Nonaccrual loans and loans past due 30 days or more and still accruing interest.

Source: Federal Reserve Board; Last data plotted for Household financial obligation ratio is Q1-2012 for Consumer loan delinquency rate is Q2-2012.

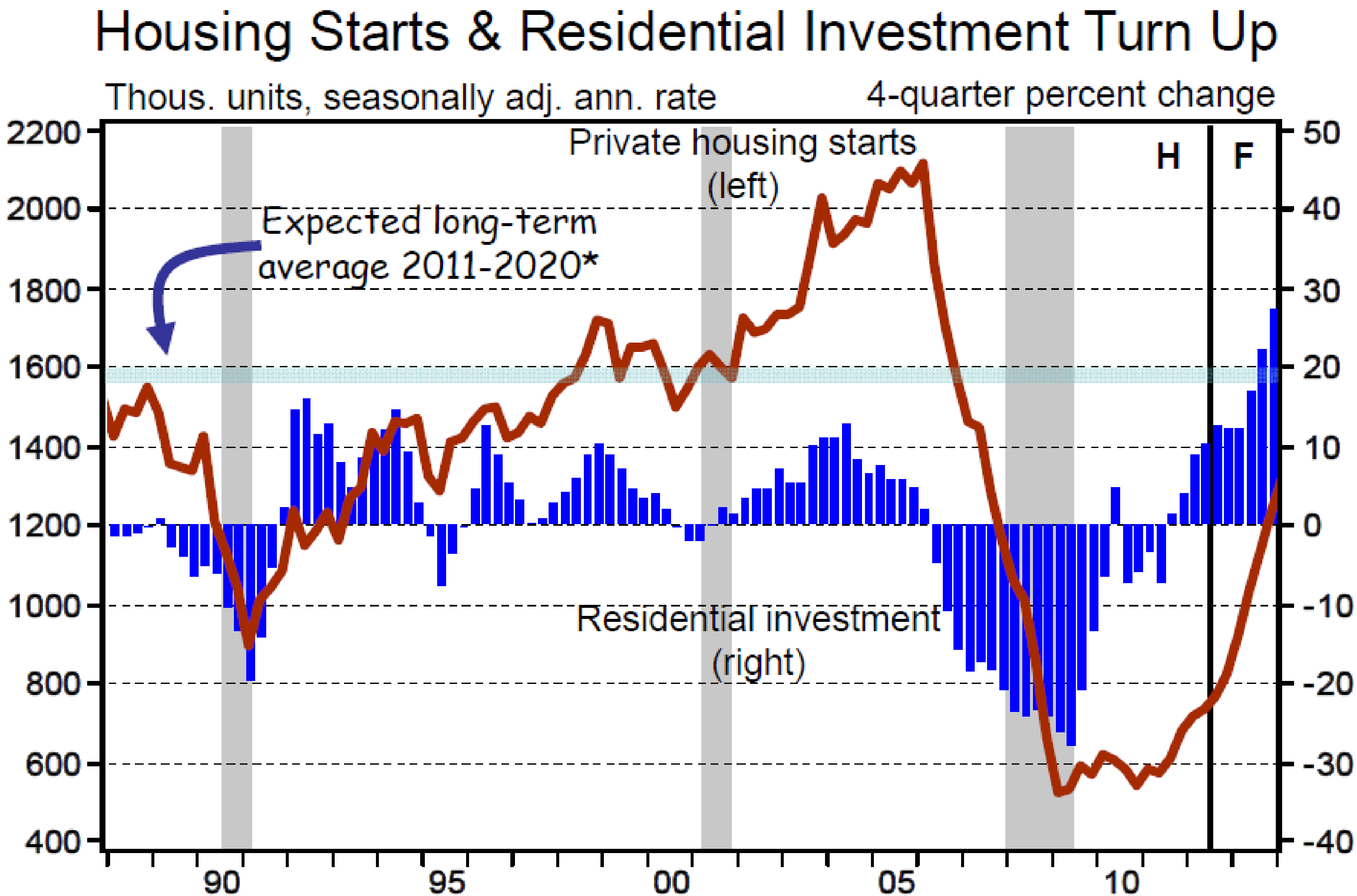
Pace of Deleveraging Slows

Personal Saving Rate



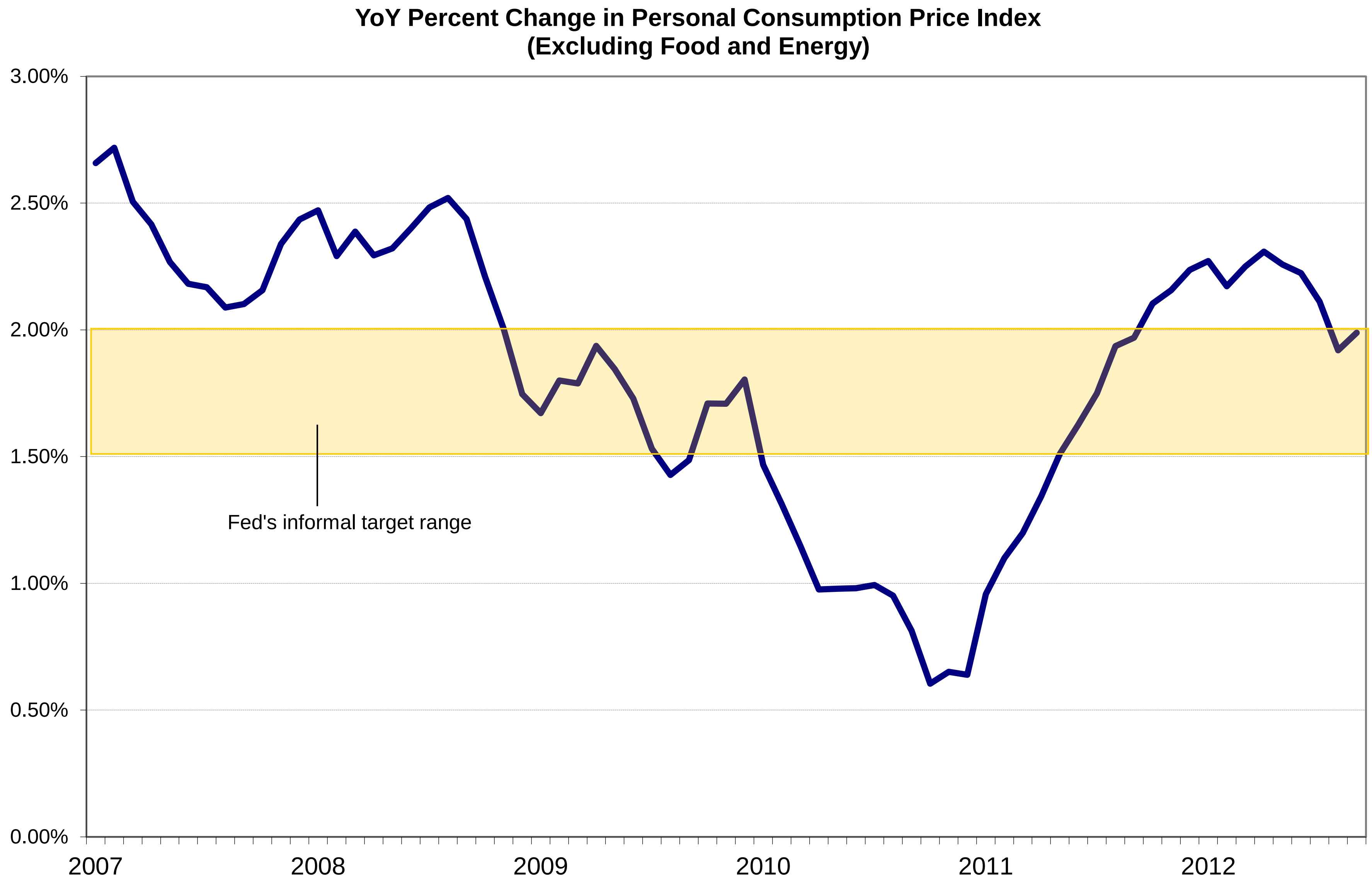
Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis, Macroeconomic Advisers, LLC; Forecast published on September 6, 2012.

Housing Recovery- Finally Underway?



Source: U.S. Census Bureau; U.S. Department of Commerce; Macroeconomic Advisers, LLC;
Forecast published on September 6, 2012.

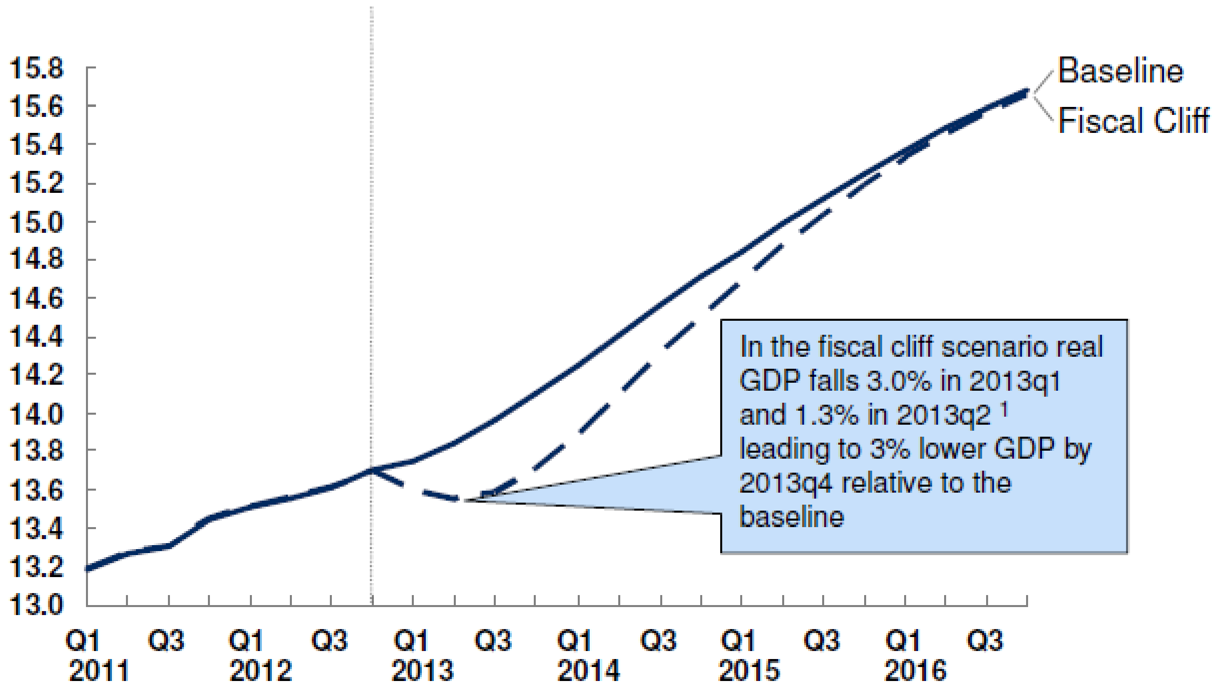
The enormous increase in the Federal Reserve Balance Sheet has been a concern to some, but actual core inflation has been moderate



SOURCE: Bureau of Labor Statistics

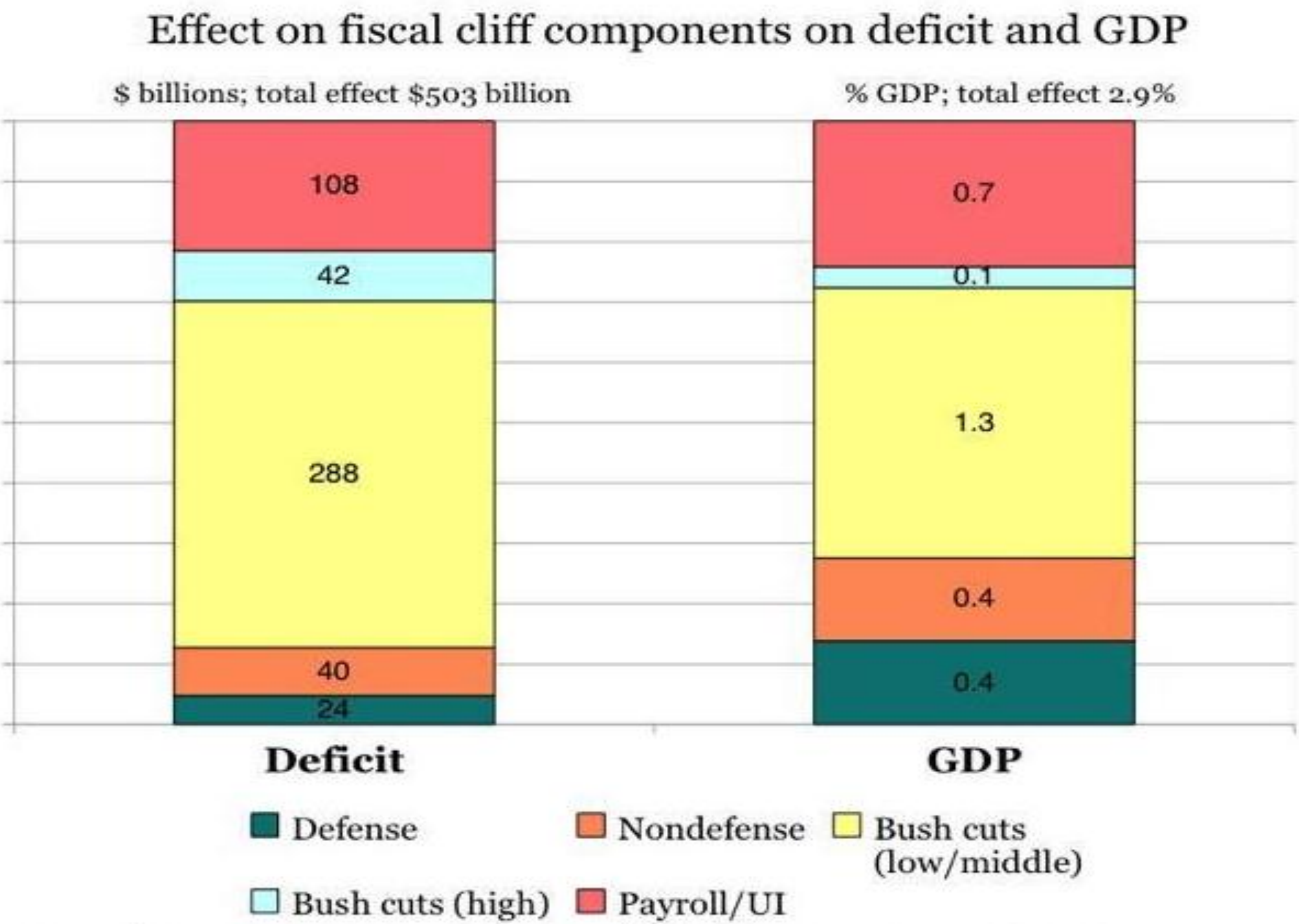
Political deadlock has created some possibility of a “fiscal cliff,” which could cause a recession in 2013

GDP, trillion 2005 USD,
Seasonally adjusted annual rates



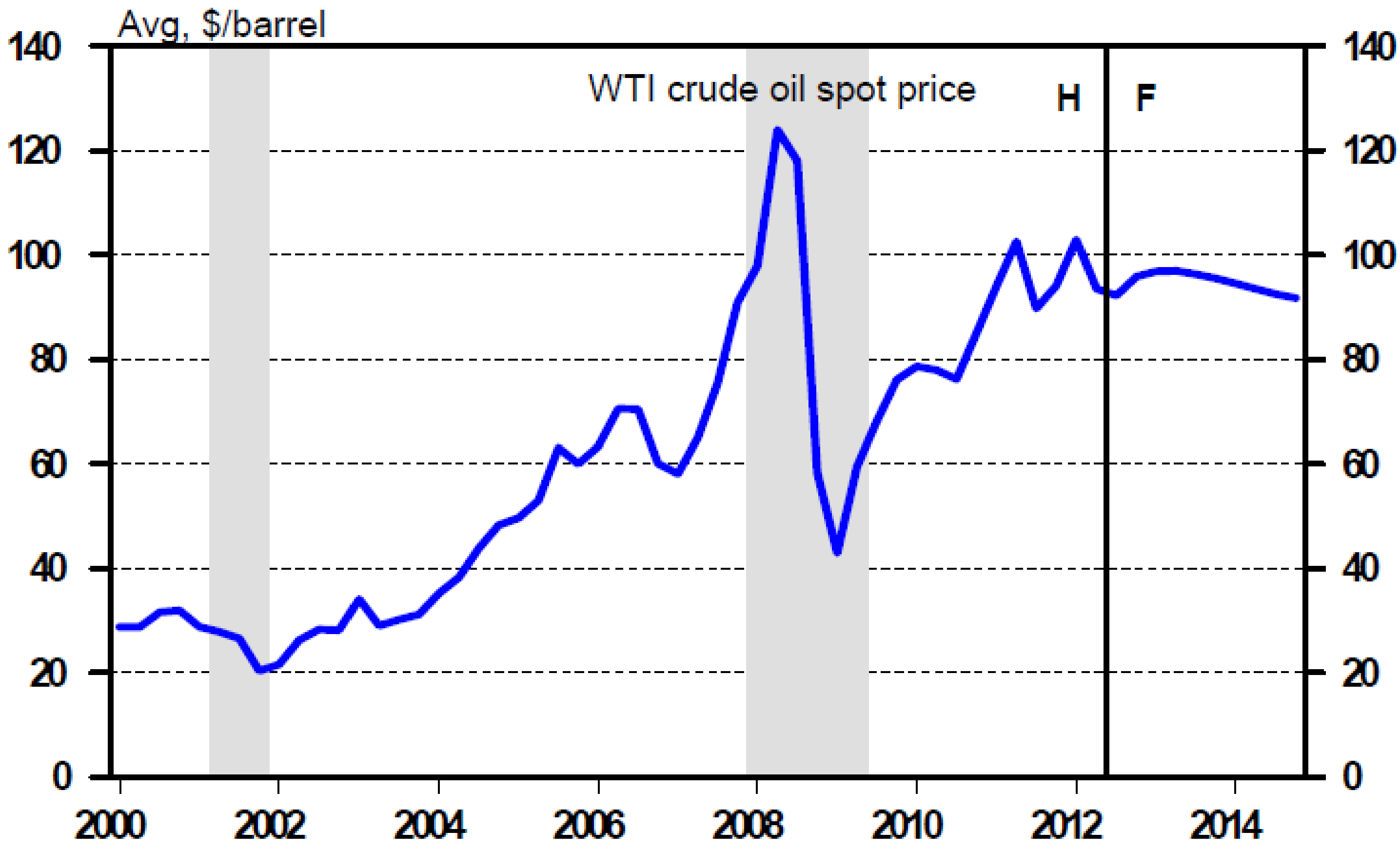
1 Annual growth rates

SOURCE: Moody’s Analytics, August 2012 Baseline and Fiscal Cliff Alternative Scenario



Source: Chart created by Wonkblog using data from the CBO report "Economic Effects of Policies Contributing to Fiscal Tightening in 2013."

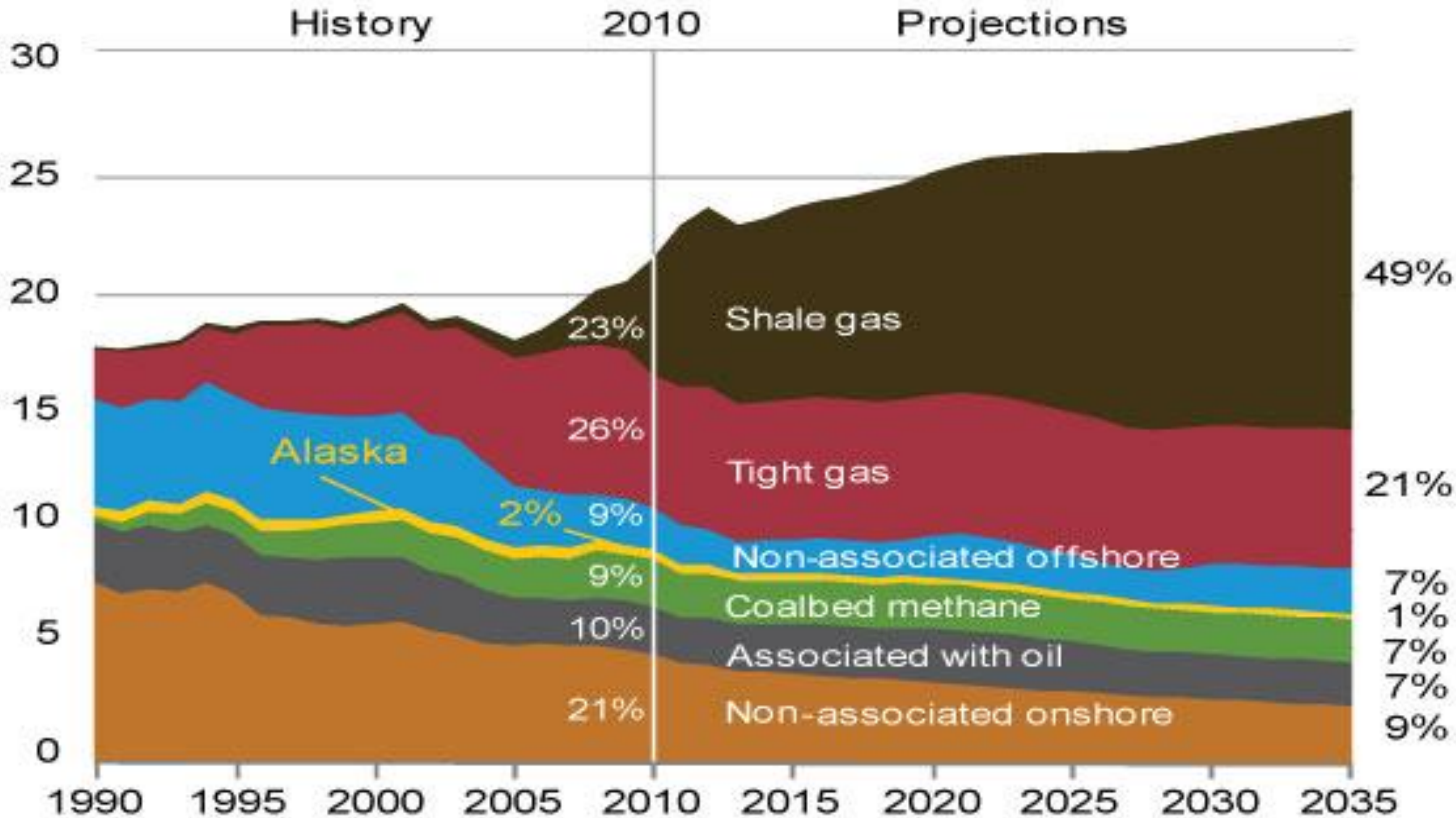
Energy Prices Volatile, but Expected to Decline



Source:Wall Street Journal; Macroeconomic Advisers; Forecast published on September 6, 2012

U.S. Natural Gas Production, 1990-2035

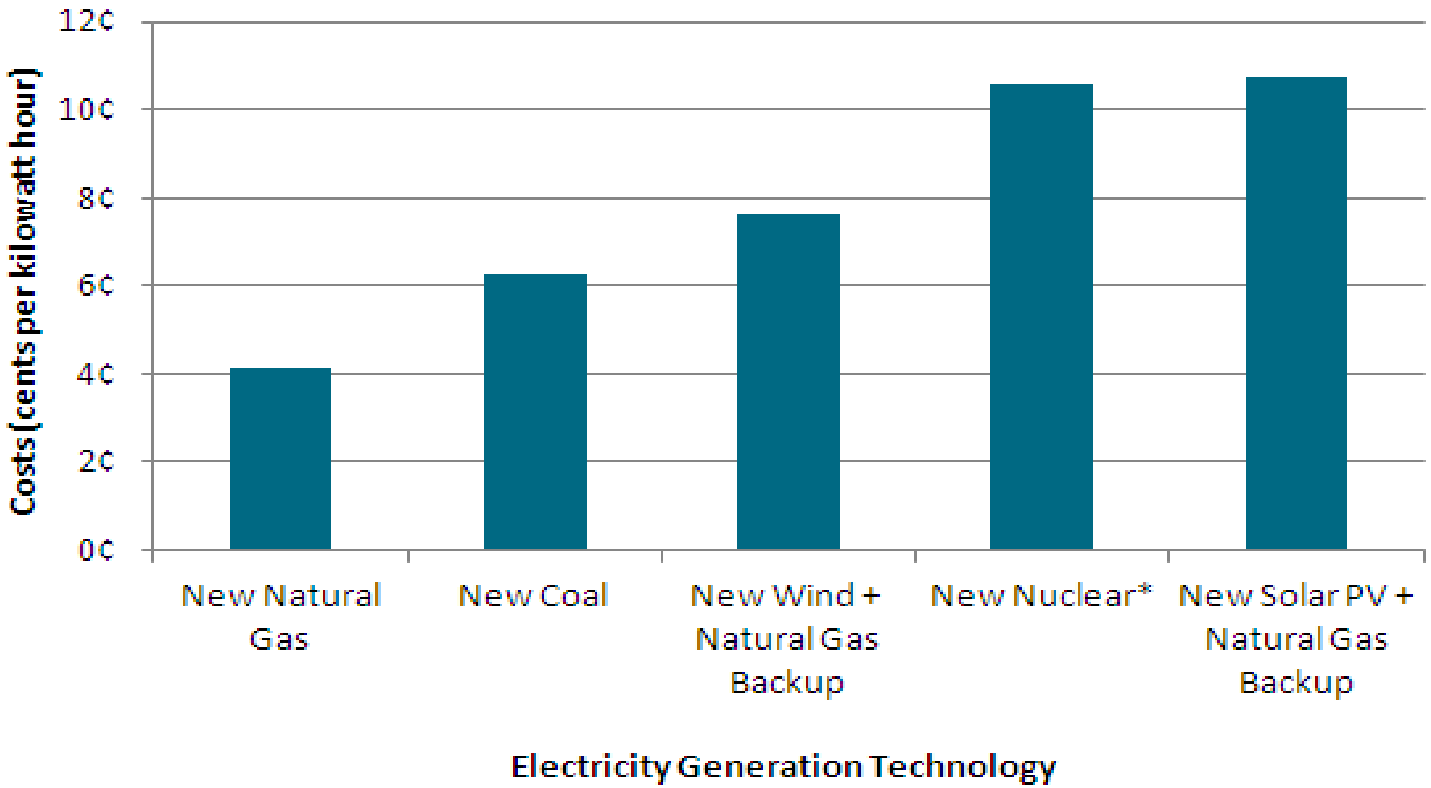
trillion cubic feet



Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration, AEO2012 Early Release Overview, January 23, 2012.

Gas is Expected to be the Fuel Used in 80 percent of New Generating Capacity

Ebinger, Massy and Avasarala 2012, Greenstone and Looney, 2012.



Concluding Comments

- A favorite explanation of the slow US recovery among conservatives is that Obama has created regulatory uncertainty—Affordable Care Act, Dodd-Frank financial regulation, energy and tax policy. Evidence is pretty thin. Obama is very unpopular in the business community but it is not clear how much this has affected their actions.
- A major new fiscal stimulus would help demand growth but politically this is difficult or impossible and it could create financial stress. A big priority is to avoid premature fiscal contraction—notably the fiscal cliff. Agreement on a long term budget plan would improve both consumer and business confidence.
- The United States economy is on a recovery path, but weakness in Europe and elsewhere is a big concern; China seems to be stabilizing.
- Changing energy technology could be an important driver of US investment. It will not bring back millions of manufacturing jobs but if environmental concerns can be solved (a big question), there is the potential for substantial investment and employment growth in extraction; revamping the transportation infrastructure; new electricity generating facilities; and in manufacturing such as plastics and petrochemicals. An important role for government as a facilitator.

Appendix

Fiscal Cliff Specifics

THE FISCAL CLIFF

LEGISLATION / PROVISIONS	Impact on Deficit*		Multiplier	Fiscal Drag	
	Fiscal Year '13	Calendar Year '13	After 4 Qtrs**	Billions of Dollars	2013 Growth***
Tax Relief, Unemployment Insurance Reauthorization, and Job Creation Act of 2011........	**-221**	**-295**	**0.7**	**-206**	**-1.3**
- *AMT patch* expired December 31, 2011, reducing payments in spring 2013					
- *Bush Tax Cuts* expire December 31, 2012					
Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012..	**-121**	**-161**	**0.7**	**-113**	**-0.7**
- *Payroll tax holiday* expires December 31, 2012	-95	-127	0.7	-89	-0.6
- *Emergency unemployment benefits* expire December 31, 2012	-26	-35	0.7	-24	-0.2
Affordable Care Act..	**-18**	**-24**	**0.7**	**-17**	**-0.1**
- New tax on earnings & invesment incomes of high-income taxpayers on January 1, 2013					
Other Expiring Tax Provisions...	**-65**	**-87**	**0.0**	**0**	**0.0**
- *Partial expensing* of investment property expires on December 31, 2012					
Budget Control Act of 2011..	**-65**	**-87**	**2.0**	**-173**	**-1.1**
- Spending *Sequester*, January 1, 2013					
Reduction in Medicare Payment Rates...	**-11**	**-15**	**2.0**	**-29**	**-0.2**
- *Doc Fix* expires December 31, 2012					
Other Changes in Revenues and Spending **..**	**-105**	**-140**	**0.5**	**-74**	**-0.5**
TOTALS...	**-606**	**-808**		**-612**	**-3.8**

Addedum: GDP, 2012:Q4 = $15,906 bil (SAAR)

* *Billions of Dollars; CBO, "Economic Effects of Reducing the Fiscal Retraint That is Scheduled to Occur in 2013" (May 2012)*
** See "Fiscal Stimulus to the Rescue," Macroeconomic Advisers' *Macro Focus* (Volume 4, Number 1; January 15, 2009), page 3.
*** Fourth-quaarter-to-fourth-quarter
**** *Not linked to specific policies; mostly reflecting revenue changes*