

Some good news from Obama

By [Steve Thorngate](#)

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The debt-ceiling fight has been the dominant story out of Washington for weeks, and for the most part the White House hasn't looked too good. But in the last few days, the administration has taken some serious steps forward on other fronts. In case you missed them amid the craziness:

- Last week, the president [announced](#) an agreement between the Environmental Protection Agency and the auto industry to boost Corporate Automobile Fuel Economy standards to an average 54.5 miles per gallon by 2025. The proposed CAFE standards reflect a compromise with the industry; still, it's a massive improvement.
- Monday, the Department of Health and Human Services issued a set of new guidelines for health insurance: starting a year from now, all private plans will be required to cover preventive services for women's health without a co-pay or deductible. Bill O'Reilly's [sexist objections](#) aside, this will do a lot to increase access to contraception--and thus reduce unwanted pregnancies.