



It Isn't "Easy" Being Joe

Four Years Ago Biden Said Being Vice President Was "Easy"; His Record Shows Otherwise

Vice President Joe Biden, Four Years Ago Today: "It's Easy Being Vice President — You Don't Have To Do Anything." "Just moments before the afternoon session got underway, C-SPAN's cameras picked up audio of Biden chatting casually with participants. 'It's easy being vice president – you don't have to do anything.' Whomever Biden was chatting with said, 'It's like being the grandpa and not the parent.' 'Yeah, that's it!' replied Biden." (Patrick Gavin, "Joe Biden: It's Easy Being Vice President," [Politico](#), 2/25/10)

DESPITE OBAMA'S SUPPORT, BIDEN'S RECORD SHOWS THE VICE PRESIDENCY IS ANYTHING BUT "EASY" FOR HIM

Obama: "I Think Joe Biden Will Go Down In History As One Of The Best Vice Presidents Ever."

OBAMA: "I think Joe Biden will go down in history as one of the best vice presidents ever, and he has been with me, at my side, in every tough decision that I've made." (MSNBC's "[HardBall With Chris Matthews](#)," 12/5/13)

Former Secretary Of Defense Robert Gates Considered Biden "Wrong On Nearly Every Major Foreign Policy And National Security Issue Over The Past Four Decades"

"Biden's Foreign Policy Expertise Was Among The Reasons Obama Chose Him As Vice President."

"Biden's foreign policy expertise was among the reasons Obama chose him as vice president. Biden, who represented Delaware for 36 years in the Senate, is known for using his long-standing relationships with world leaders to help shape policy." (Nichole Gaudiano, "Gates' Book Stirs Debate On Biden's Foreign Policy Creds," [USA Today](#), 1/10/14)

Former Secretary Of Defense Robert Gates: "I Think He [Biden] Has Been Wrong On Nearly Every Major Foreign Policy And National Security Issue Over The Past Four Decades." (Robert M. Gates, "Duty: Memoirs Of A Secretary At War," 2014, p. 288)

- **Gates: "So On A Number Of These Major Issues ... I Think He [Biden] Had Been Wrong."**
GATES: "But the other side of it is, frankly, I believe it. The vice president, when he was a senator — a very new senator — voted against the aid package for South Vietnam, and the — that was part of the deal when we pulled out of South Vietnam to try and help them survive. He said that when the, when the Shah fell in Iran in 2009 — 1979, rather — that that was a step forward for progress toward human rights in Iran. He opposed virtually every element of President Reagan's defense buildup. He voted against the B-1, the B-2, the MX and so on. He voted against the first Gulf War. So on a number of these major issues, I just — I, frankly, over a long period of time, felt that he had been on the wrong — he'd been — I think he had been wrong." (NPR News' "[Morning Edition](#)," 1/13/14)

Biden Was Opposed To The Raid That Killed Osama Bin Laden Due To The Political Consequences Of The Operation Failing. “The story of the raid by now has been told countless times. Here is my perspective... The president and his senior-most national security team met multiple times in March and April to debate whether to strike the compound. Joe Biden and I were the two primary skeptics... Biden’s primary concern was the political consequences of failure.” (Robert M. Gates, “Duty: Memoirs Of A Secretary At War,” 2014, p. 539)

On One Occasion, Agreeing With Biden Was Enough To Make Gates Rethink His Position. “After one meeting at the White House, Mullen and I were riding back to the Pentagon together, and Mike turned to me and said, ‘You know you agreed with the vice president today?’ I said I realized that and was therefore rethinking my position.” (Robert M. Gates, “Duty: Memoirs Of A Secretary At War,” 2014, p. 288)

Gates Has Accused Biden Of “Stoking” Obama’s Suspicion Of The Military. GATES: ““And he was in there advising the president every day. He was, I think, stoking the president’s suspicion of the military.” (NPR News’ “[Morning Edition](#),” 1/13/14)

Biden Sold ObamaCare To The Senate Based On Keeping Insurance And Expanding The Number Of Insured, Instead Millions Have Lost Insurance And Enrollment Has Fallen Short

Biden’s Editorial Headline: “Why The Senate Should Vote Yes On Health Care.” (Joe Biden, “Why The Senate Should Vote Yes On Health Care,” [The New York Times](#), 12/19/09)

- **Biden: “Those Who Already Have Insurance Will Be Able To Keep It.”** (Joe Biden, “Why The Senate Should Vote Yes On Health Care,” [The New York Times](#), 12/19/09)
- **Biden: “And More Than 30 Million Uninsured Americans Will Gain Access To Affordable Health Care Coverage.”** (Joe Biden, “Why The Senate Should Vote Yes On Health Care,” [The New York Times](#), 12/19/09)

5 Million People That Purchased Insurance On The Individual Health Insurance Market Have Received Cancellation Notices. “Several insurance industry officials and state insurance commissioners expressed frustration Friday, saying they were ‘baffled’ by President Barack Obama’s assertion that the cancellation of millions of insurance policies occurred because a key provision of the Affordable Care Act didn’t work as expected. The administration was warned three years ago that regulations would have exactly that effect, they said. They said the widespread cancellations in the individual health insurance market — roughly 5 million and counting -- are in line with what was projected under regulations drawn up by the administration in 2010, requirements that both insurers and businesses objected to at the time. Cancellations also are occurring in the small group market, which covers businesses with between two and 50 employees, they noted.” (Lisa Myers, “Insurers, State Officials Say Cancellation Of Health care Policies Just As They Predicted,” [NBC News](#), 11/15/13)

Biden Now Admits That ObamaCare Enrollment Will Be 1 To 2 Million Below Expectations. “Vice President Joe Biden said Wednesday that it would be a good start for the federal health care law if 5 million to 6 million people sign up by the end of March, an acknowledgement that enrollments might fall significantly short of the Obama administration’s unofficial goal of 7 million.” (“Joe Biden: Obamacare Enrollment May Miss Mark,” [Politico](#), 2/19/14)

After Being Sent By Obama To Negotiate The FY2011 Continuing Resolution, Biden Was Heavily Criticized For Being Just A “Voice On The Phone”

In 2011, Obama Dispatched Biden To Capitol Hill To Try And Broker A Compromise Over The FY2011 Continuing Resolution. “President Obama on Wednesday intervened in a partisan brawl that threatens to shut down the government, inviting congressional leaders of both parties to sit down with

Vice President Biden and work out a compromise to fund federal programs through the end of the fiscal year.” (Shailagh Murray and Lori Montgomery, “Obama Invites Congressional Leaders To Meet With Biden On Budget,” [The Washington Post](#), 3/2/11)

Instead, Biden Spent Most Of The Time Calling In Periodically, Leaving Negotiating To His Staff.

“POLITICO reported Monday that despite being anointed the point man on the budget by President Obama in early March, Biden hasn’t played a major role in the negotiations, instead waiting until staff-level discussions near an end so he can come in to finish brokering a deal. In the meantime, he’s been talking with members of Congress by phone every day.” (Matt Negrin, “Budget Team Confers With Biden,” [Politico](#), 3/29/11)

- **“Vice President Joe Biden Stepped In Briefly To Fill The Breach But Has Been More A Voice On The Phone Than A Physical Presence.”** (David Rogers, “Fiscal Cloud Still Hangs Over Congress,” [Politico](#), 3/27/11)
- **Biden “Pursued A Semi-Comical” Effort To Seem Involved, Calling GOP Leaders From Russian President Medvedev’s Dacha To Discuss The Budget.** “At the same time, Vice President Joe Biden, delegated as a top budget negotiator by Obama, pursued a semi-comical second track: reaching out long distance to Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) and House Speaker John Boehner (R-Ohio) from Russian President Dmitry Medvedev’s dacha.” (Glenn Thrush and Carrie Budoff Brown, “W.H. Struggles To Lead On Spending,” [Politico](#), 3/9/11)

Rep. Henry Cuellar (D-TX) Questioned Obama’s Decision To Defer To Biden On The Budget: “If He’s The Chief Negotiator ... And Then He Takes Off In The Middle Of This Debate, Then Where Does That Leave Us?” “Cuellar also questioned the appointment of Vice President Joe Biden to spearhead the bipartisan negotiations in search of a deal. Biden met with party leaders on Thursday, but left the country a few days later to meet with leaders in Russia and Finland. ‘If he’s the chief negotiator -- at least that’s what I thought he was gonna be -- and then he takes off in the middle of this debate, then where does that leave us?’ Cuellar asked.” (Mike Lillis, “Cuellar Dem Leadership’s Lone New Face,” [The Hill](#), 3/10/11)

Biden, Self-Proclaimed “Not A Budget Guy,” Led Negotiations On Raising The Debt Ceiling In 2011 That Ultimately Failed

In 2011, Obama Put Biden In Charge Of A Group To Negotiate A Solution To The Debt Ceiling. “Yet how the math adds up to achieve those reductions remains an open question. The White House hasn’t posted a plan, and the president called for creating another group, led by Vice President Biden and congressional leaders, to come up with legislation.” (Mark Murray and Domenico Montanaro, “Obama’s First 2012 Campaign Speech,” [MSNBC’s “First Read”](#), 4/13/11)

After Obama Tapped Biden To Lead Negotiations, Biden Confessed To White House Advisers “He Was Going To Need Preparation. A Lot Of It.” “The president had asked him to lead a group of lawmakers in an effort to deal with the mounting federal deficit, and the debt ceiling extension, Biden explained, and he was going to need preparation. A lot of it.” (Bob Woodward, *The Price of Politics*, 2012, p. 111)

- **Biden Noted That He Was “Not A Budget Guy” And Had Once Given Up His Seat On The Senate Budget Committee “Because He Disliked Budget Work So Much.”** “He had once voluntarily given up his seat on the Senate Budget Committee because he disliked budget work so much. ‘I am not a budget guy, but you’re going to brief the hell out of me,’ he told Furman, a 40-year-old Harvard Ph.D. economist.” (Bob Woodward, *The Price of Politics*, 2012, p. 111)

When Biden Summoned Democrats To His Senate Office, The Seventh Day Of Talks, Rep. Chris Van Hollen (D-MD) Thought “The Administration Didn’t Seem To Have A Strategy. It Was Unbelievable. There Didn’t Seem To Be Any Core Principles.” “Van Hollen said firewalls had a precedent. Budget agreements in 1991, 1993 and 1997 all had them. He said the 193 Democrats would not go for deep

general cuts without firewalls. But the administration might be able to go without firewalls, Biden interjected, eager to get an agreement. Not helpful at all, thought Van Hollen. Biden later backtracked some, suggesting a 50-50 Defense/non-Defense firewall for just two of the 10 years. Inouye repeated what he had told the Democrats in their pre-meeting: Defense could be cut. Domestic programs needed protection. A growing feeling of incredulity came over Van Hollen. The administration didn't seem to have a strategy. It was unbelievable. There didn't seem to be any core principles." (Bob Woodward, *The Price Of Politics*, 2012, p. 128)

- **As Biden-Led Negotiations Went On Unsuccessfully, Lawmakers Were "Calling On the President To Be More Personally Involved In The Discussions."** "In April, President Obama appointed Biden to lead the bipartisan deficit reduction talks with a group of lawmakers from each of the four caucuses. But as each week has gone by without a deal, lawmakers have been calling on the president to be personally involved in the discussions." (John R. Parkinson, "Top Republicans Walk Out Of VP Biden's Debt Talks," [ABC News](#), 6/23/11)

The Talks With Biden Collapsed Over The Administration's Demands For Tax Increases. "The breakdown of the latest U.S. deficit-cutting talks puts the onus on President Barack Obama and House Speaker John Boehner to bridge partisan differences over tax increases and cuts to entitlements such as Medicare. House Majority Leader Eric Cantor and second-ranking Senate Republican Jon Kyl yesterday walked away from a seven-weeks-long negotiating effort led by Vice President Joe Biden to find a way to cut at least \$1 trillion and raise the nation's \$14.3 trillion debt ceiling before an Aug. 2 deadline." (Heidi Przbyla, "Breakdown Of Biden Deficit Talks Puts Debt-Cut Onus On Obama, Boehner," [Bloomberg](#), 6/24/11)

- **While Biden's Negotiations Were Failing, Obama Stepped In To Negotiate Personally.** "Vice President Joe Biden and Eric Cantor, the House majority leader and Boehner's No. 2 in the Republican caucus, had been holding talks in hopes of finding some preliminary agreement that might avert disaster, but those talks broke down in late June, primarily over the issue of taxes; the two men and their staffs had identified something like \$2 trillion in cuts over the next decade, but the White House wasn't going to make a deal that didn't include some new tax revenue, and Cantor was adamant that raising taxes — any taxes — was a deal-breaker. By then, however, Obama and Boehner had themselves started meeting furtively in the White House, in secret negotiating sessions that grew out of a much-discussed golf outing in June." (Matt Bai, "Obama vs. Boehner: Who Killed The Debt Deal?," [The New York Times](#), 3/28/12)

Biden Was Supposed To Lead Oversight Of Obama's Stimulus, But Quickly Conceded That "Some Of This Money Is Going To Be Wasted"

Vice President Biden Was Appointed By Obama To "Lead A Tough, Unprecedented Oversight Effort" To Hold Politicians Accountable For Stimulus Spending. OBAMA: "And with a plan of this scale comes enormous responsibility to get it right. That is why I have asked Vice President Biden to lead a tough, unprecedented oversight effort – because nobody messes with Joe. I have told each member of my Cabinet as well as mayors and governors across the country that they will be held accountable by me and the American people for every dollar they spend." (President Barack Obama, [Remarks of President Barack Obama](#), Washington, DC, 2/24/09)

- **Obama: "Because Nobody Messes With Joe."** (President Barack Obama, [Remarks of President Barack Obama](#), Washington, DC, 2/24/09)

Biden: "We Know Some Of This Money Is Going To Be Wasted." "U.S. Vice President Joe Biden acknowledged on Tuesday that some waste is inevitable in the spending of a \$787 billion economic stimulus package, in a characteristically blunt assessment. 'We know some of this money is going to be

wasted,' Biden said during a roundtable discussion in New York with business leaders aimed at promoting the two-year stimulus plan." ("Biden Says Some Waste Inevitable Part Of Stimulus," [Reuters](#), 6/3/09)

An Investigation Into Data Errors And Mistaken Reporting Was Launch During The Stimulus First Year. "The head of the board that tracks stimulus spending said inspectors general on Friday will review causes of numerous mistakes in an October report estimating the number of jobs created or saved by the program." (Louise Radnofsky and Maurice Tamman, "Inspectors To Review Stimulus-Data Errors," [The Wall Street Journal](#), 12/4/09)

- **"There's Enough Embarrassment To Go Around," According To The Chairman Of The Recovery Accountability And Transparency Board.** "I think there's enough embarrassment to go around,' said Earl Devaney, chairman of the Recovery Accountability and Transparency Board, in an interview with The Wall Street Journal. Twelve inspectors general sit on the board. It's 'clear that the job could have been done better,' he said." (Louise Radnofsky and Maurice Tamman, "Inspectors To Review Stimulus-Data Errors," [The Wall Street Journal](#), 12/4/09)

At The Energy Department Alone, More Than 100 Criminal Investigations Were Launched Into The Way Stimulus Money Was Spent. "The Energy Department's inspector general has launched more than 100 criminal investigations related to 2009 economic stimulus spending. In written testimony prepared for delivery to the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee today, Inspector General Gregory Friedman said the investigations have involved 'various schemes, including the submission of false information, claims for unallowable or unauthorized expenses, and other improper uses of Recovery Act funds.'" (Darius Dixon, "DOE IG: 100+ Stimulus-Related Criminal Probes," [Politico](#), 11/2/11)

Stimulus Funds Were Misused By States Instead Of Boosting School Funding And Protecting Programs. "The Department of Education's inspector general reports that some states are using stimulus dollars to replace money they've cut from their education budget — despite instructions to the contrary. When the Department of Education began releasing stimulus funds last April, it told states the money was to be used to boost funding for schools and colleges and protect key programs and jobs." (Claudio Sanchez, "Report: School Stimulus Funds Not Used As Intended," [NPR](#), 10/10/09)