



Democrats Break Ranks On ObamaCare

YESTERDAY, OBAMA SENT OFFICIALS TO BRIEF HOUSE DEMOCRATS ON OBAMACARE'S DISASTROUS ROLLOUT

Obama Officials At CMS Were Unable To Tell The Democrats In Attendance When The ObamaCare Website Would Be Up And Running. "Despite requests, the officials at the briefing, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services deputy administrator Gary Cohen and CMS communications director Julie Bataille, did not tell the House Democrats when the website would be fully up and running. 'Well we're working on it,' the officials replied, according to Nolan. 'That's not good enough,' Nolan told TIME. 'We don't have a timeline, but December 15 is a key date,' confirmed Rep. Henry Waxman (D-Calif.), referring to the date applicants need to be enrolled if they want to have insurance starting January 1, 2014.' (Alex Rogers, "House Democrats Angry At Botched ObamaCare Website Rollout," [Time](#), 10/23/13)

- **"House Democrats Could Not Specifically Identify The Site's Problems, Much Less Explain How Long The Contractors Would Need To Fix Them."** "After a Wednesday morning meeting with two Obama Administration officials involved in the new online health insurance marketplace, House Democrats could not specifically identify the site's problems, much less explain how long the contractors would need to fix them." (Alex Rogers, "House Democrats Angry At Botched ObamaCare Website Rollout," [Time](#), 10/23/13)

The Lack Of Answers Has Infuriated Obama's Closest Allies

Obama's Closest Allies Are Becoming Critical Of The ObamaCare Rollout. "The rocky rollout of the Affordable Care Act again came under sharp criticism Wednesday, two weeks into the launch, but this time some of the loudest voices were among top Democrats, including President Obama's closest allies." (Lisa Mascaro and Christi Parsons, "Obama Allies Join In Criticism Of Health Care Website," [Los Angeles Times](#), 10/23/13)

Democrats Are Angry Over How The White House Has Handled The ObamaCare Rollout. "After the meeting, many Democrats expressed anger at the way the matter was being handled by the White House. 'Some of us, myself included, are somewhat resentful [and] upset, about the apparent incompetency in designing and rolling this thing out,' said Rep. Rick Nolan (D-Minn.). 'Who was it that said we are going to go ahead knowing it doesn't work?'" (Alex Rogers, "House Democrats Angry At Botched ObamaCare Website Rollout," [Time](#), 10/23/13)

- **"Frustrated Democrats Lamented That" ObamaCare Problems "Have Inflicted Damage" On The Popular Law.** "Frustrated Democrats lamented Wednesday that persistent problems with new health care exchanges have inflicted damage on the public's perception of the already

unpopular 'ObamaCare' — with some lawmakers insisting President Barack Obama should ensure those responsible lose their jobs." (Josh Lederman, "Frustrated Dems Lament Damage From Website Bugs," [The Associated Press](#), 10/23/13)

Democrats Are "Unhappy With The Performance Of The ObamaCare Website." "Democrats on Capitol Hill said they were unhappy with the performance of the ObamaCare website, which has been plagued with problems since its debut Oct. 1. Even the president's longtime campaign guru, David Axelrod, was critical of the administration's handling of the issue." (Lisa Mascaro and Christi Parsons, "Obama Allies Join In Criticism Of Health Care Website," [Los Angeles Times](#), 10/23/13)

Democrats Are Calling For The White House To Hold People Accountable For The Screw-ups

"Democratic Party Leaders Also Suggested That Heads Should Roll." "Democratic Party leaders also suggested that heads should roll, even while maintaining strong support for ObamaCare." (Lisa Mascaro and Christi Parsons, "Obama Allies Join In Criticism Of Health Care Website," [Los Angeles Times](#), 10/23/13)

No. 4 House Democrat Xavier Becerra (D-CA): "I Absolutely Believe That Somebody Should Be Held Accountable." "'I absolutely believe that somebody should be held accountable,' said Rep. Xavier Becerra (D-Los Angeles), the No. 4 Democrat in the House." (Lisa Mascaro and Christi Parsons, "Obama Allies Join In Criticism Of Health Care Website," [Los Angeles Times](#), 10/23/13)

Representative Rick Nolan (D-MN): "Somebody's Got To Man Up Here — Get Rid Of These People." "'Somebody's got to man up here — get rid of these people,' said Rep. Rick Nolan (D-Minn.), who stopped short of calling for the ouster of any specific administration official or contractor but characterized the president's response to the rollout as 'weak.'" (Lisa Mascaro and Christi Parsons, "Obama Allies Join In Criticism Of Health Care Website," [Los Angeles Times](#), 10/23/13)

- **Representative Rick Nolan (D-MN): "I Would Fire That Person."** "'I would fire that person,' Nolan added." (Alex Rogers, "House Democrats Angry At Botched ObamaCare Website Rollout," [Time](#), 10/23/13)

Representative Sean Maloney (D-NY): "I Think They [Obama Administration] Were Slow Off The Dime. I'd Like To See Somebody Lose Their Job Over This. I Think It's Outrageous." "He continued: 'I can assure you that I won't be sugarcoating it. We need to be very honest with people about the fact that there have been real problems with helping people sign up particularly on the website. And that can't happen – that just can't happen. I'm glad the administration has been getting in the game on this a little more recently. I think they were slow off the dime. I'd like to see somebody lose their job over this. I think it's outrageous.'" (Mario Trujillo, "Two House Dems Call For Firings Over Health Care Rollout," [The Hill's Briefing Room](#), 10/23/13)

- **Representative Sean Maloney (D-NY): "The Ability Of Folks To Navigate These Exchanges Is More Important Than Protecting Anyone Who Failed To Do Their Job."** "'The success of this program and the ability of folks to navigate these exchanges is more important than protecting anyone who failed to do their job,' Maloney said, according to a transcript provided by his office." (Mario Trujillo, "Two House Dems Call For Firings Over Health Care Rollout," [The Hill's Briefing Room](#), 10/23/13)

Despite Hearing Calls For Obama To Hold People Accountable, "The White House Is Not Contemplating Firing Anyone." "At the moment, the White House is not contemplating firing anyone, aides to the president say. Obama is more interested in fixing the problem than in assigning blame, they said." (Lisa Mascaro and Christi Parsons, "Obama Allies Join In Criticism Of Health Care Website," [Los Angeles Times](#), 10/23/13)

DEMOCRATS ARE NOW CLAMORING FOR A DELAY IN OBAMACARE'S INDIVIDUAL MANDATE

“The Hard Line Democrats Have Drawn Against Delaying A Core Element Of The Federal Health Law Has Begun To Crack.” “The hard line Democrats have drawn against delaying a core element of the federal health law has begun to crack, as problems with the new federal insurance website prompted calls for President Barack Obama to delay penalties on people who don't carry health coverage.” (Siobhan Hughes and Colleen McCain Nelson, “Democratic Unease Grows On Health Law,” [The Wall Street Journal](#), 10/23/13)

- **“The Signs Of Growing Democratic Unease Came As The White House Acknowledged For The First Time ... That The Problems Extend Beyond Sign-Up Logjams ...”** “The signs of growing Democratic unease came as the White House acknowledged for the first time Wednesday that the problems extend beyond sign-up logjams that kept thousands of people from being able to view insurance offerings online.” (Siobhan Hughes and Colleen McCain Nelson, “Democratic Unease Grows On Health Law,” [The Wall Street Journal](#), 10/23/13)

Some Of Obama’s Closest Allies Are Calling For Obama Are Suggesting That Some Parts Of ObamaCare Should Be Delayed. “Even those who support the new health care law — and its promise of providing affordable insurance coverage to millions of Americans — suggested that aspects of it may need to be postponed unless changes can be put into place quickly. Some were calling on Obama to hold people accountable for the mistakes.” (Lisa Mascaro and Christi Parsons, “Obama Allies Join In Criticism Of Health Care Website,” [Los Angeles Times](#), 10/23/13)

Senator Richard Blumenthal (D-CT): “We Have To Consider Delaying The Mandate That Is The Penalty.” CHRIS JANSING: “So given what is going on and the purpose of this hearing or at least the stated purpose of the hearing. Do you agree with other democrats who have come out and said we need to delay the penalty for the individual mandate?” SEN. BLUMENTHAL: “We have to consider delaying the mandate that is the penalty. The administration made some.” JANSING: “How long, do you think?” SENATOR RICHARD BLUMENTHAL: “That will depend the leveling with the American people as to how soon these glitches are going to be solved. If it's a matter of days, then the delay would be different than if it's a matter of months, but the important point here is that we need more certainty.” (MSNBC’s “[Jansing & Co.](#),” 10/24/13)

Representative Gerald E. Connolly (D-VA): “I Don’t Know That The Answer Is Delay The Mandate; The Answer May Be To Delay The Penalties.” “I don’t know that the answer is to delay the mandate; the answer may be to delay the penalties,” said Rep. Gerald E. Connolly (D-Va.). (Lisa Mascaro and Christi Parsons, “Obama Allies Join In Criticism Of Health Care Website,” [Los Angeles Times](#), 10/23/13)

Representative Gene Green (D-TX) On The Possible Delay Of The Individual Mandate: “I Think The Administration Is Going To Have To Look At It, And I’d Encourage Them To Do So.” “Rep. Gene Green (D., Texas) said the law allows the White House to waive penalties, and if technology problems are protracted, it should act. ‘I think the administration is going to have to look at it, and I’d encourage them to do so,’ he said.” (Siobhan Hughes and Colleen McCain Nelson, “Democratic Unease Grows On Health Law,” [The Wall Street Journal](#), 10/23/13)

Representative Jared Polis (D-CO) Wants His Constituents Exempted From The Mandate Penalty. “Health insurance rates are so high in Colorado’s mountain resort areas that U.S. Rep. Jared Polis plans to seek waivers from the federal government so people who skip buying insurance in 2014 won’t face financial penalties. ‘We will be encouraging a waiver. It will be difficult for Summit County residents to become insured. For the vast majority, it’s too high a price to pay,’ said Polis, D-Boulder.” (Katie Kerwin Mccrimmon, “Polis Fights Sky-High Rates As Ski Town Signups Stall,” [Health Policy Solutions](#), 10/24/13)

And 2014 Senate Democrats Are Bravely Running Away From ObamaCare

Sen. Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH) Called On The Obama Administration To Delay ObamaCare’s

Individual Mandate, Saying “Given The Existing Problems With The Website, I Urge You To Consider Extending Open Enrollment Beyond The Current End Date Of March 31, 2014.” “Sen. Jeanne Shaheen (D-N.H.) on Tuesday called on the White House to extend open enrollment for the new health insurance exchange after the Web site's glitch-ridden debut and ongoing tech issues. ‘Given the existing problems with the website, I urge you to consider extending open enrollment beyond the current end date of March 31, 2014,’ Shaheen wrote in a letter to President Obama. ‘Allowing extra time for consumers is critically important so they have the opportunity to become familiar with the website, survey their options and enroll.’” (Aaron Blake, “Democratic Sen. Shaheen Calls For White House To Extend Open Enrollment,” [The Washington Post](#), 10/22/13)

- **On September 30, Shaheen Voted To Shut Down The Government Rather Than Delay ObamaCare’s Individual Mandate For A Year.** (H.J. Res. 59, [Roll Call Vote #211](#), Tabled 54-46: R 0-46; D 54-0, 9/30/13, Shaheen Voted Yea)

Sen. Mark Pryor (D-AR) Announced Yesterday That He Supports Delaying ObamaCare’s Individual Mandate, Saying “I Believe, Given The Technical Issues, It Makes Sense To Extend The Time For People To Sign Up.” “Democratic Sen. Mark Pryor, who faces re-election in 2014, said he also supports pushing back the March 31, 2014 deadline, but neither he nor Shaheen advocated a firm deadline for the extension. ‘I read Senator Shaheen’s letter today and support the common sense idea to extend the date for open enrollment. I believe, given the technical issues, it makes sense to extend the time for people to sign up. In addition, the Administration should state clearly how the enforcement mechanism will work if people can’t sign up in time. We all want to see the law work, and I hope the Administration will take a hard look at this reasonable suggestion,’ Pryor said in a statement. (Roby Brock, “Sen. Pryor Advocates For Enrollment Deadline Push On Health Care Law,” [Talk Business Arkansas](#), 10/23/13)

- **On October 15, Pryor Said He Was “Not In Favor” Of Delaying The Individual Mandate For A Year.** “CHUCK TODD: ‘Very quickly, health care will be a big part of Tom Cotton’s campaign against you. Would you be in favor of a one-year delay in the individual mandate?’ SEN. PRYOR: ‘I’m not in favor of that.’” (MSNBC’s, [“Daily Rundown,”](#) 10/15/13)

Sen. Mark Begich (D-AK) Announced Yesterday That He Supports Delaying The Individual Mandate. “Sen. Mark Begich says he supports extending open enrollment for individuals to buy health insurance under the federal health care law. The Alaska Democrat, in a statement, says he wants to work with the Obama administration to ensure individuals aren't unfairly penalized if technical issues continue with the online insurance marketplaces.” (“Begich Supports Extending Open Enrollment,” [The Associated Press](#), 10/23/13)

- **On October 14, Begich Said He Opposed Delaying The Individual Mandate For A Year.** “CHUCK TODD: ‘But are you open to delaying, are you open to delaying the individual mandate a year?’ BEGICH: ‘No, I’m not, but I’ll tell you Chuck what I am, as you know I have four or five proposals on the table about how to deal with the health care law that has some imperfections in it that need to be fixed.’” (MSNBC’s, [“Daily Rundown,”](#) 10/14/13)

Sen. Mary Landrieu (D-LA) Said Yesterday That She Supports Delaying The Individual Mandate, Saying. “With people still having a hard time accessing the Affordable Care Act’s troubled website, Sen. Mary Landrieu, D-La., endorsed a proposal Wednesday to give Americans more time to sign up. Right now, the enrollment deadline to sign up for coverage in the first year of the health law’s exchanges is March 31. ‘I’ve always been committed to making the Affordable Care Act work and will continue doing so,’ Landrieu said in a statement. ‘I support extending the enrollment period to give people who haven’t had access or who want more choice enough time to shop from the 40 competitively priced plans in

Louisiana's marketplace. The administration should consider this common-sense suggestion.” (Bruce Alpert, “Sen. Mary Landrieu Supports Delay In Enrollment Deadline For Affordable Care Act,” [The Times-Picayune](#), 10/23/13)

- **On September 30, Landrieu Said “I’m Not For Delaying The Mandate.”** “When asked whether she is open to delaying the individual mandate or other measures to a continuing resolution, Landrieu responded: ‘absolutely not.’ ‘I’m not for delaying the mandate, I would vote again for the Affordable Care Act,’ Landrieu said. ‘I am for the Affordable Care Act. Period. End.’” (Seung Min Kim, “Government Shutdown: Red-State Senate Dems Stick With Their Party,” [Politico](#), 9/30/13)

Sen. Kay Hagan (D-NC) Said Yesterday That The Obama Administration Should Delay The Individual Mandate, Saying “I Support Extending Open Enrollment So NC Families Have Time To Shop For Insurance Plan Right For Them.” “#ACA website problems unacceptable. I support extending open enrollment so NC families have time to shop for insurance plan right for them” (Sen. Kay Hagan, [Twitter Feed](#), 10/23/13)

- **Just Weeks Ago, Hagan Rebuffed Attempts To Coax Her Into Supporting A One-Year Delay To The Individual Mandate.** “There are other potential, conservative-leaning or red-state Democrats who were publicly lobbied by House Republicans on Saturday. Rep. Richard Hudson (R-N.C.), for one, made entreaties to his home-state senator, Kay Hagan. ‘I’ll bet she doesn’t want this thing implemented during her reelection, secretly,’ he said. ‘She won’t admit that.’ ‘What will move this is, if there are other Democrat senators who put pressure on Reid,’ he added. ‘Again, I think there are a number of Democrats who secretly want a one-year delay.’ ... Senator Hagan isn’t taking political advice from the people willing to harm servicemembers and seniors just to score political points off a shutdown,’ said Hagan spokeswoman Sadie Weiner.” (Sabrina Siddiqui And Sam Stein, “Manchin, Hagan Lobbied To Support One-Year Obamacare Delay,” [The Huffington Post](#), 9/28/2013)