



# ObamaCare Fact Check Failures

***This Week, Fact Checkers Find Obama And His Administration Playing Fast And Loose With ObamaCare Facts***

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## **OBAMA PROMISED THAT IF YOU LIKE YOUR HEALTH PLAN, YOU COULD KEEP IT**

**During The First 2012 Presidential Debate, Obama Promised ObamaCare Would Not Mean A “Government Take Over” And Would Allow You To “Keep Your Own Insurance.”** BARACK OBAMA: “And let me tell you exactly what ‘ObamaCare’ did. Number one, if you’ve got health insurance it doesn’t mean a government take over. You keep your own insurance. You keep your own doctor. But it does say insurance companies can’t jerk you around.” (President Barack Obama, [Remarks At Presidential Debate](#), Denver, CO, 10/3/12)

***Fact Checkers Finally Noted That One Of Obama’s Most Famous Promises Was Broken***

**The Associated Press: Obama’s Assurance That People Could Keep Their Health Plan “Is Proving Empty For People Who Are Getting Cancellation Notices.”** “President Barack Obama’s soothing promise that Americans happy with their health insurance could simply keep it was doomed from the start, and everyone familiar with the market seemed to recognize that except the president. Even his aides said four years ago, early in the huge push for his health care law, that he wasn’t to be taken literally on that point. But he kept making the promise, literally and forcefully, through the long debate about the overhaul, after it became law and directly to voters in the campaign for the 2012 election.” (Calvin Woodward, “Promises, Promises: A Big One That Got Away,” [The Associated Press](#), 10/31/13)

- **Obama’s Statement That People Losing Plans Can “Just Shop Around” Is A “Striking Departure From His Vow Stretching Back To 2009.”** “Obama said Wednesday that those who are seeing individual policies canceled should ‘just shop around’ and get another one. That’s a striking departure from his vow stretching back to 2009: “No matter how we reform health care, we will keep this promise to the American people. If you like your doctor, you will be able to keep your doctor, period. If you like your health care plan, you’ll be able to keep your health care plan, period. No one will take it away, no matter what.” (Calvin Woodward, “Promises, Promises: A Big One That Got Away,” [The Associated Press](#), 10/31/13)

**The Washington Post’s Fact Checker Gives Obama’s Promise That Americans Could Keep Their Health Care Plan Four Pinocchios.** “The president’s promise apparently came with a very large caveat: ‘If you like your health care plan, you’ll be able to keep your health care plan — if we deem it to be adequate.’ Four Pinocchios.” (Glenn Kessler, “Obama’s Pledge That ‘No One Will Take Away’ Your Health Plan,” [The Washington Post’s Fact Checker](#), 10/30/13)

- **FactCheck.org: “Reality Is Catching Up With [Obama’s] Political Spin.”** “We’ve been saying for years that President Obama was over-simplifying and over-promising when he kept saying, ‘if you like your health care plan, you can keep your health care plan’ under the new health care law. Now reality is catching up with his political spin.” (Brooks Jackson, “Reality Confronts Obama’s False Promise,” [FactCheck.org](#), 10/29/13)

***The Washington Post’s Fact Checker: Obama’s Keep Your Plan Promise Was “One Of The Most Memorable Of His Presidency” And “Possibly Foolish.”*** “The president’s pledge that ‘if you like your insurance, you will keep it’ is one of the most memorable of his presidency. It was also an extraordinarily bold — and possibly foolish — pledge, unless he thought he simply could dictate exactly how the insurance industry must work. At the time, some observers noted the problems with Obama’s promise.” (Glenn Kessler, “Obama’s Pledge That ‘No One Will Take Away’ Your Health Plan,” [The Washington Post’s Fact Checker](#), 10/30/13)

- **It’s Another “Unfulfillable Blanket Promise” From Obama.** “This was another example of reality catching up to the president’s unfulfillable blanket promise that ‘you can keep your plan.’ Not everybody can. That’s been widely expected for years, and now it’s becoming obvious.” (Brooks Jackson, “Reality Confronts Obama’s False Promise,” [FactCheck.org](#), 10/29/13)
- **“The Promise Stretched Credulity A Number Of Ways: — It’s Practically Baked Into The Law That Some Policies Are Going To Disappear.”** (Calvin Woodward, “Promises, Promises: A Big One That Got Away,” [The Associated Press](#), 10/31/13)

***The Washington Post’s Fact Checker: “One Might Excuse The President For Making An Aspirational Pledge As The Health-Care Bill Was Being Drafted, But It Turns Out He Kept Saying It After The Bill Was Signed Into Law.”*** (Glenn Kessler, “Obama’s Pledge That ‘No One Will Take Away’ Your Health Plan,” [The Washington Post’s Fact Checker](#), 10/30/13)

- **Obama’s Defense Of His Pledge “Conveniently Ignores The Regulations Written By The Administration To Implement The Law.”** “The administration is defending this pledge with a rather slim reed — that there is nothing in the law that makes insurance companies force people out of plans they were enrolled in before the law passed. That explanation conveniently ignores the regulations written by the administration to implement the law.” (Glenn Kessler, “Obama’s Pledge That ‘No One Will Take Away’ Your Health Plan,” [The Washington Post’s Fact Checker](#), 10/30/13)
- **The Obama Administration “Cited Technicalities To Avoid That He Went Too Far In His Repeated Pledge, Which, After All, Is One Of The Most Famous Statements Of His Presidency.”** “The president’s statements were sweeping and unequivocal — and made both before and after the bill became law. The White House now cites technicalities to avoid admitting that he went too far in his repeated pledge, which, after all, is one of the most famous statements of his presidency.” (Glenn Kessler, “Obama’s Pledge That ‘No One Will Take Away’ Your Health Plan,” [The Washington Post’s Fact Checker](#), 10/30/13)

### ***An Obama Senior Adviser’s Defense Of Obama’s Broken “Keep Your Plan” Promise Was Called “Extreme” By Fact Checkers***

**Obama Sr. Advisor Valerie Jarrett Defended Obama’s Promise, Tweeting That “Nothing In ObamaCare Forces People Out Of Their Health Plans.”** “But critics of the law have been on the attack about what they call Obama’s broken promise. Defending the law, White House senior adviser Valerie Jarrett sent out this message via Twitter on Oct. 28, 2013: ‘FACT: Nothing in #ObamaCare forces people out of their health plans. No change is required unless insurance companies change existing plans.’” (Louis Jacobson, “Valerie Jarrett Says ‘Nothing In ObamaCare Forces People Out Of Their Health Plans,’” [PolitiFact.com](#), 10/30/13)

- **Valerie Jarrett: “FACT: Nothing In #ObamaCare Forces People Out Of Their Health Plans.”** (Valerie Jarrett, [Twitter Feed](#), 10/28/13)

**Valerie Jarrett’s Claim Was “Extreme ... We Rate The Statement False.”** “Saying there’s ‘nothing’ in the law that forces people out of their health plans is a pretty extreme claim -- one that implies that insurers who pull the plug on non-ObamaCare-compliant plans are acting in some sort of government-free vacuum. Even if it’s technically true that the insurer pulls the plug on a plan, the insurer will only be doing this because the law itself and its implementing regulations have created a context in which, sooner or later, old-fashioned plans will inevitably pass into oblivion -- as the law always intended. We rate the statement False.” (Louis Jacobson, “Valerie Jarret Says ‘Nothing In ObamaCare Forces People Out Of Their Health Plans,’” [PolitiFact.com](#), 10/30/13)

## **FACT CHECKERS FIND THAT OBAMACARE’S LEAD ADMINISTRATOR LIED OR DOESN’T KNOW MUCH ABOUT THE LAW SHE MUST IMPLEMENT**

### ***HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius Was Unable To Truthfully Answer A Question About The ObamaCare Exchange***

**For The First Time Since The ObamaCare Exchange Website Launch, HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius Testified Before Congress.** “Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius testified before Congress Oct. 30 for the first time since the federal health care marketplaces went online, answering questions about problems with the website and facing accusations that President Barack Obama lied to the American people about who could keep their health care plan.” (Steve Contorno, “HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius Says ‘It’s Illegal’ For Her To Use The Health Insurance Exchange,” [PolitiFact.com](#), 10/30/13)

**Kathleen Sebelius: “If I Have Affordable Coverage In My Workplace, I’m Not Eligible To Go Into The Marketplace. ... It’s Illegal.”** REPRESENTATIVE CORY GARDNER (CO-R): “You’re in charge of this law, correct? Why aren’t you in the exchange?” SEBELIUS: “Because I’m part of the federal employee health benefit plan. ... I’m not eligible for the exchange.” GARDNER: “You can decide to drop your coverage of your employer. You have the choice to decide not to choose ...” SEBELIUS: “Not true, sir.” GARDNER: “I would encourage you to be just like the American people and enter the exchange and agree to find a way ...” SEBELIUS: “It’s illegal.” (Committee On Energy And Commerce, U.S. House Of Representatives, Hearing, 10/30/13)

- **ABC News: HHS Secretary Sebelius’s Response “Was Problematic.”** “But her response to Republicans who pressed her Wednesday to sign up under a health insurance exchange was problematic. She said that because she’s part of the federal employee health plan, she’s not eligible to switch to the exchanges.” (Calvin Woodward, “FACT CHECK: A Sebelius Dodge At Hearing,” [ABC News](#), 10/31/13)
- **FactCheck.org: “Worse Than That, Sebelius Was Wrong When She Told Gardner She Could Not Go Into The Exchange Because She Has Employer-Sponsored Coverage.”** (Eugene Kiely and Robert Farley, “Is It ‘Illegal’ For Sebelius To Buy Exchange Plan?” [FactCheck.org](#), 10/30/13)

**PolitiFact: “It’s Pretty Clear Sebelius Was Wrong When She Said ‘It’s Illegal’ For Her To Buy Insurance On The Exchange.”** “It’s pretty clear Sebelius was wrong when she said ‘it’s illegal’ for her to buy insurance on the exchange because she already has affordable insurance through her employer. Those inclined to do so certainly can, though the financial incentives to stay with the employer-based plan are quite convincing.” (Steve Contorno, “HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius Says ‘It’s Illegal’ For Her To Use The Health Insurance Exchange,” [PolitiFact.com](#), 10/30/13)

- **PolitiFact: “We Rate Her Statement Pants On Fire.”** (Steve Contorno, “HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius Says ‘It’s Illegal’ For Her To Use The Health Insurance Exchange,” [PolitiFact.com](#), 10/30/13)

## ***Secretary Sebelius Misled The Public When She Said ObamaCare's Launch Date Was Written Into The Law***

***The Associated Press: "FACT CHECK: Sebelius Misstates Law On Signup Start"*** (Calvin Woodward, "FACT CHECK: Sebelius Misstates Law On Signup Start," [The Associated Press](#), 10/28/13)

**HHS Secretary Sebelius "Has Asserted That The Law Required Health Insurance Sign-Ups To Start Oct. 1."** "Misstating the health care law she is responsible for administering, Kathleen Sebelius has asserted that the law required health insurance sign-ups to start Oct. 1, whether the system was ready or not." (Calvin Woodward, "FACT CHECK: Sebelius Misstates Law On Signup Start," [The Associated Press](#), 10/28/13)

- **HHS Secretary Sebelius: "The Law Said The Go-Time Was Oct. 1."** "In a visit to a community health center in Austin, Texas, on Friday, Sebelius acknowledged more testing would have been preferable. 'In an ideal world there would have been a lot more testing, but we did not have the luxury of that and the law said the go-time was Oct. 1,' she said." (Calvin Woodward, "FACT CHECK: Sebelius Misstates Law On Signup Start," [The Associated Press](#), 10/28/13)

**"In Fact, The Decision When To Launch The Sign-Up Website Was Hers."** (Calvin Woodward, "FACT CHECK: Sebelius Misstates Law On Signup Start," [The Associated Press](#), 10/28/13)

- **As Secretary Of Health And Human Services, The Launch Date Of The ObamaCare Exchange Was At The Discretion Of Kathleen Sebelius.** "But the law imposed no legal requirement to open the website Oct 1. The law says only that the enrollment period shall be 'as determined by the secretary.' The launch date was set not in the law, but in regulations her department had issued. Agencies routinely allow themselves flexibility on self-imposed deadlines." (Calvin Woodward, "FACT CHECK: Sebelius Misstates Law On Signup Start," [The Associated Press](#), 10/28/13)