



Crisis Of Competence

Incompetence Is Contagious In Obama's Washington

Obama: "As President Of The United States, It's Pretty Clear To Me That I'm Responsible For Folks Who Are Working In The Federal Government And You Know, Harry Truman Said The Buck Stops With You." OBAMA: "Well, here's what I know, we were just talking about responsibility and as president of the United States, it's pretty clear to me that I'm responsible for folks who are working in the federal government and you know, Harry Truman said the buck stops with you." ("President Obama Says Romney Should Answer Bain Capital Questions," [WJLA](#), 7/13/12)

- **Obama: "One Of The Things You Learn Is, You Are Ultimately Responsible For The Conduct Of Your Operations..."** OBAMA: "Ultimately Mr. Romney, I think, is going to have to answer those questions, because if he aspires to being president one of the things you learn is, you are ultimately responsible for the conduct of your operations, but again that's probably a question that he's going to have to answer and I think that's a legitimate part of the campaign." ("President Obama Says Romney Should Answer Bain Capital Questions," [WJLA](#), 7/13/12)

TWO THINGS THAT ARE CERTAIN FOR THE IRS: SCANDALS AND TAXES

According To An Inspector General's Report, The IRS Spent \$50 Million On 220 Conferences Between 2010 And 2012. "The Internal Revenue Service, already under fire after officials disclosed that the agency targeted conservative groups, faces increased scrutiny because of an inspector general's report that it spent about \$50 million to hold at least 220 conferences for employees between 2010 and 2012." (Alan Fram, "IRS Woes Grow With Report Of Conference Spending," [The Associated Press](#), 6/3/12)

- **Conference Spending Included \$4 Million For An August 2010 Trip To Anaheim, California, For Which They Did Not Even Attempt To Negotiate Lower Room Rates.** "The conference spending included \$4 million for an August 2010 gathering in Anaheim, Calif., for which the agency did not negotiate lower room rates, even though that is standard government practice, according to a statement by the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee." (Alan Fram, "IRS Woes Grow With Report Of Conference Spending," [The Associated Press](#), 6/3/12)
- **"Instead, Some Of The 2,600 Attendees Received Benefits, Including Baseball Tickets And Stays In Presidential Suites That Normally Cost \$1,500 To \$3,500 Per Night."** (Alan Fram, "IRS Woes Grow With Report Of Conference Spending," [The Associated Press](#), 6/3/12)

- **“In Addition, 15 Outside Speakers Were Paid A Total Of \$135,000 In Fees, With One Paid \$17,000 To Talk About ‘Leadership Through Art,’ The House Committee Said.”** (Alan Fram, “IRS Woes Grow With Report Of Conference Spending,” [The Associated Press](#), 6/3/12)
- **The IRS Spent \$11,430 For A “Happiness Expert” And \$27,500 For An “Innovation Expert.”** “Source says IRS spent \$11,430 to have ‘happiness expert’ lead 4 workshops, \$27,500 for ‘innovation expert’ at 2010 conference” ([Kelly O'Donnell Twitter Feed](#), 6/3/13)
- **One Conference Speaker Was Paid \$17,000 To Discuss “Leadership Through Art.”** “In addition, 15 outside speakers were paid a total of \$135,000 in fees, with one paid \$17,000 to talk about ‘leadership through art,’ the House committee said.” (Alan Fram, “Report: IRS Spent \$50M Holding 220 Employee Conferences Over Three Years,” [The Associated Press](#), 6/3/13)

An IRS “Dancing” Video Was Filmed During The 2010 Anaheim, California Conference. “In the latest black eye for the Internal Revenue Service, the agency provided Congress on Friday with another video featuring its employees, this one showing about a dozen of them line dancing on a stage. The video of the IRS workers practicing their dance moves, which lasts just under three minutes, comes weeks after it was revealed that agency workers produced two other videos parodying the ‘Star Trek’ and ‘Gilligan’s Island’ TV shows. The latest recording cost about \$1,600 and was produced to be shown at the end of a 2010 training and leadership conference held in Anaheim, Calif., said IRS spokeswoman Michelle Eldridge.” (“Newly Released IRS Video Shows Employees Line Dancing, Agency Calls It Unacceptable,” [The Associated Press](#), 5/31/13)

- **“In The Video, Various Workers Comment As Colleagues Practice Their Dancing In The Background To Music That Sounds Like ‘Cupid Shuffle,’ A 2007 Hit By The Performer Cupid.”** “In the video, various workers comment as colleagues practice their dancing in the background to music that sounds like ‘Cupid Shuffle,’ a 2007 hit by the performer Cupid. In the version obtained by The Associated Press, IRS employees’ names have been erased.” (“Newly Released IRS Video Shows Employees Line Dancing, Agency Calls It Unacceptable,” [The Associated Press](#), 5/31/13)
- **At The Same Conference, The IRS Spent \$60,000 To Produce “Star Trek” And “Gilligan’s Island” Themed Training Videos.** “That Star Trek video was produced for the same 2010 conference. The agency called the Star Trek video, which lasted six minutes and featured employees dressed as characters from the popular show, a mistake. The Star Trek and Gilligan’s Island videos cost about \$60,000 combined to make, the IRS said in March.” (“Newly Released IRS Video Shows Employees Line Dancing, Agency Calls It Unacceptable,” [The Associated Press](#), 5/31/13)

THE EPA HONORED A FAKE EMPLOYEE, WHILE ACTUAL EMPLOYEES ALLOWED AN EPA FACILITY TO DEGRADE TO “DEPLORABLE CONDITIONS”

The EPA Awarded “Richard Windsor,” The Fake Email Account Used By Former Administrator Lisa Jackson, “At Least Six Ethics And Cyber-Security Certifications.” “Environmental Protection Agency officials granted at least six ethics and cyber-security certifications to ‘Richard Windsor,’ the fake employee invented for former EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson’s use for conducting official business. In a response to a Freedom of Information Act request filed in April by Christopher C. Horner of the Competitive Enterprise Institute, EPA’s Eric Wachter said in a May 31 letter that ‘as you will recall from many of your previous requests, Administrator Jackson’s secondary email account was Windsor.richard@epa.gov, and she completed the EPA-hosted computer-based training while using that particular account.’ Wachter offered no explanation for Jackson’s decision to enroll in the ethics and cyber-security courses under the fake name rather than her own. The courses are offered through EPA’s Information Technology department and are required for many top agency officials.” (Mark Tapscott, “Watchdog:

EPA Grants Ethics, Cyber-Security Certificates To Fake Employees 'Richard Windsor,'" [Washington Examiner](#), 6/3/13)

- **"Among The Certificates Awarded To 'Richard Windsor' Was A Nov. 2, 2009 'Certificate Of Completion' For 'E-Mail Records Management.'"** (Mark Tapscott, "Watchdog: EPA Grants Ethics, Cyber-Security Certificates To Fake Employees 'Richard Windsor,'" [Washington Examiner](#), 6/3/13)
- **Windsor Received A Certificate For Ethical Behavior In 2010, 2011 And 2012.** "Official policies 'Richard Windsor' likely would have been informed of during the e-mail course was EPA's bar against using fake email names while conducting official business. During the ensuing years, however, EPA IT department officials awarded additional certificates to 'Richard Windsor,' including three for completion of the agency's 'Scholastica Decentia,' the Certificate for Ethical Behavior, in 2010, 2011 and 2012." (Mark Tapscott, "Watchdog: EPA Grants Ethics, Cyber-Security Certificates To Fake Employees 'Richard Windsor,'" [Washington Examiner](#), 6/3/13)

EPA Employees Used A Warehouse Facility As A Makeshift Gym, While The Facility Degraded To "Potentially Hazardous" And "Deplorable" Conditions. "Employees at an Environmental Protection Agency warehouse in Landover, Md., worked out in a makeshift gym while conditions inside the facility 'were rotting and becoming potentially hazardous,' according to an EPA inspector general report issued on Monday. 'Deplorable conditions existed in the warehouse,' the report by Inspector General Arthur Elkins Jr. states. 'Door jambs were corroded; dirt, dust and vermin feces were pervasive; and several items were rotting and potentially hazardous.'" (Amy Harder, "'Deplorable' Conditions Cited At EPA Warehouse In Maryland," [National Journal](#), 6/3/13)

- **In Addition To The Makeshift Gym, EPA Employees Created Hideaways With Televisions And Couches And Left Sensitive Information Exposed.** "The report found that the 70,000-square-foot warehouse—one of EPA's largest—was storing large amounts of expensive, unused equipment, ranging from computers to pianos. It also found numerous security and safety issues. ... Employees had created hideaways arranged to be out of the sight of security cameras, the report said. 'The warehouse contained multiple unauthorized and hidden personal spaces created by and for the workers that included televisions, refrigerators, radios, microwaves, chairs and couches,' the IG report said. 'These spaces contained personal items, including photos, pin ups, calendars, clothing, books, magazines and videos.' They also created a makeshift gym spanning an area larger than 30 feet by 45 feet." (Amy Harder, "'Deplorable' Conditions Cited At EPA Warehouse In Maryland," [National Journal](#), 6/3/13)

UNDER OBAMA, THERE HAVE BEEN A LITANY OF INSTANCES OF GOVERNMENT INCOMPETENCE

The GSA Spent \$823,000 On A Vegas Conference

The General Services Administration's 2010 Western Region Conference "Made Headlines When An Inspector General Report Found A Pattern Of Excessive Spending, Waste, And Possible Fraud On The Pricey, Taxpayer-Funded Las Vegas Conference." "The conference made headlines this week when an Inspector General report found a pattern of excessive spending, waste and possible fraud on the pricey, taxpayer-funded Las Vegas conference, where organizers went out of their way to organize a lavish, over-the-top celebration that included a mindreader, a clown, fancy food, and several 'trial runs' by GSA employees." (Byron Tau, "Videos Of \$800K GSA Conference Surface," [Politico](#), 4/7/12)

At A House Oversight And Government Committee Hearing, The GSA Official Who Planned The

Conference, Jeff Neely, Pled The Fifth To Avoid Incriminating Himself. “A top General Services Administration official who was in charge of organizing a lavish Las Vegas conference that’s drawn congressional and taxpayer fire repeatedly invoked his Fifth Amendment right against self-incrimination Monday on Capitol Hill. During Monday’s hearing, Jeff Neely, refused to answer several questions from House Oversight and Government Committee chairman Darrell Issa (R-Calif.), including rudimentary questions such as his official title at GSA and whether he was currently employed at the agency.” (Seung Min Kim, “GSA Official Pleads Fifth In Conference Scandal,” [Politico](#), 4/16/12)

On Top Of The Conference, Neely “Spent Thousands Of Taxpayer Dollars On A Variety Of Wasteful Trips And Events.” “The General Services Administration executive who organized an \$822,000 conference in Las Vegas in 2010 also spent thousands of taxpayer dollars on a variety of wasteful trips and events, according to lawmakers and GSA’s top investigator.” (Andy Medici, “Inspector General: GSA Official’s Waste Part Of Pattern,” [USA Today](#), 4/17/12)

- **Neely’s Wife Accompanied Him On Lavish Trips As Taxpayers “Picked Up The Tab.”** “The senior government executive who organized the lavish Las Vegas conference at the center of a General Services Administration spending scandal took dozens of trips for the agency. The boss’s wife accompanied him on some of them — and taxpayers picked up the tab. Deborah Neely wasn’t always just sharing husband Jeffrey E. Neely’s hotel rooms at resorts from Las Vegas to the Pacific islands. She handled party arrangements, directed event planners to spend government money and arranged lodging for relatives on the GSA trip to Las Vegas in 2010, an unusual role revealed in transcripts of interviews that the agency’s inspector general’s office conducted with Jeffrey Neely, as well as in congressional hearings.” (Lisa Rein, “GSA Official’s Wife Accompanied Him On Trips At Taxpayer Expense,” [The Washington Post](#), 4/17/12)

Obama’s DOE Squandered \$535 Million On Solyndra & Nearly \$200 Million On Fisker

In August 2011, Solyndra Announced That It Would File For Bankruptcy, “Immediately Laying Off 1,100 Employees.” “Solyndra, a Fremont solar tech manufacturer, announced Wednesday it is suspending operations and immediately laying off 1,100 employees. The company said it will also file for bankruptcy.” (George Avalos, “Fremont Solar Tech Firm Solyndra To Shut Down, Lay Off 1,100 Workers,” [The San Jose Mercury News](#), 8/31/11)

The Most High-Profile DOE Investigation Involves Solyndra, A Solar Company That Filed For Bankruptcy After Receiving A \$535 Million Loan Guarantee. “Friedman’s most high-profile investigation involves Solyndra, the California solar company that filed for bankruptcy protection last year after winning a \$535 million DOE loan guarantee. During testimony before a House Energy and Commerce subcommittee, Friedman said the Justice Department and his office continue to look into Solyndra, but he stayed clear of offering any other specifics.” (Darren Samuelsohn, “Up To 300 IG Investigations Targeting DOE Programs,” [Politico](#), 4/18/12)

Obama Was Personally Warned About The DOE’s Loan Guarantee Program’s Financial And Political Risks. “Long before the politically connected California solar firm Solyndra went bankrupt, President Obama was warned by his top economic advisors about the financial and political risks of the Energy Department loan guarantee program that boosted the company’s rapid ascent.” (Tom Hamburger, Kim Geiger and Matea Gold, “Obama Advisors Raised Warning Flags Before Solyndra Bankruptcy,” [Los Angeles Times](#), 9/26/11)

- **The Solyndra Scandal “Shows How Wealthy People Who Help Fund A President’s Election Campaign Get Special Access To The White House.”** “The scandal at base is about how taxpayer money is used, or misused, by government. It shows how the White House uses companies for its own purposes and how companies try to use the White House to serve their aims. It shows how

far political appointees, and particularly the senior-most aides in the West Wing, will go to push the chief executive's agenda on a sometimes slow but generally conscientious federal bureaucracy. And it shows how wealthy people who help fund a president's election campaign get special access to the White House." (Patrick B. Pexton, "Post Reporters, Shining A Light On The Solyndra Scandal," [The Washington Post](#), 11/25/11)

- **The Solyndra Scandal Shows How Despite Obama's Promises To Be "Transparent, Accountable, And Responsible," He "Often Isn't."** "The reporters have used these documents to push the story further and tie it to fundraisers. They have also consulted forensic accountants to help analyze how sick Solyndra was when its executives, and Obama officials, were publicly touting the company's rosy future. And they have shown that an administration that promised to be transparent, accountable and responsible often isn't." (Patrick B. Pexton, "Post Reporters, Shining A Light On The Solyndra Scandal," [The Washington Post](#), 11/25/11)

Last Month, Fisker Automotive Announced That They Would Lay Off Most Workers In A Sign Of The "Death Of The Anaheim Company." "Stymied by unsuccessful efforts to craft a deal with Chinese investors to save the company, struggling carmaker Fisker Automotive laid off most of its workers Friday. Analysts said the move, combined with retaining a bankruptcy law firm last month, likely signals the death of the Anaheim company, which was founded by auto designer Henrik Fisker in 2007 with high hopes of selling highly styled hybrid sports cars and sedans." (Jerry Hirsch, "U.S. Taxpayers Could Wind Up With Fisker Automotive Assets," [Los Angeles Times](#), 4/5/13)

- **"Fisker Has Sold Just 2,000 Of Its Karma Hybrid Sports Cars And Hasn't Assembled A Vehicle In About Nine Months."** (Jerry Hirsch, "U.S. Taxpayers Could Wind Up With Fisker Automotive Assets," [Los Angeles Times](#), 4/5/13)
- **The Energy Department Has "Seized \$21 Million From Fisker Automotive, The Financially Distressed Electric Carmaker That Has Drawn \$192 Million In Federal Loans."** (Ben German, "Energy Dept. Recoups \$21 Million From Struggling Green Automaker," [The Hill](#), 4/23/13)
- **Last Month, The Fisker CEO Admitted That No Cars Had Been Made In The United States.** REP. MARK MEADOWS: "How many of these vehicles were ever produced in the United States?" BERNHARD KOEHLER, FISKER CO-FOUNDER AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER: "The Atlantic is in development right now..." MEADOWS: "So, zero?" REINHARD: "Correct." (Committee on House Oversight and Government Reform Subcommittee on Economic Growth, Job Creation and Regulatory Affairs, [Hearing](#), 4/24/13)

Former Defense Secretary Leon Panetta Cost The Government \$32,000 Per Flight For His Weekend Trips To California

"The Admission By Defense Secretary Leon Panetta That He Has Been Flying Home Frequently To California On The Pentagon's Tab At The Cost Of \$32,000 Per Round Trip Is Another Headache." (Amie Parnes, "Twin GSA, Secret Service Scandals Pose New Threat To Obama," [The Hill](#), 4/19/12)

As The Pentagon Advocated For Deep Cuts In The Defense Budget, Mr. Panetta Was "Cross-Country Commuting" Even Though "The President Singled Out Travel As An Area Ripe For Savings." "Mr. Panetta's cross-country commuting was first reported by the Los Angeles Times in September, although that report did not detail the extent of the trips. The expenses involved with the commute drew another look after President Obama issued marching orders in November calling for all Cabinet agencies to cut back on everything — from out-of-town conferences to cellphone use and officials gifts such as pencils and mugs. The president singled out travel as an area ripe for savings." (Susan Crabtree, "Panetta Paid \$17k For \$860K Commute To California," [The Washington Times](#), 4/6/12)