



Democrats To Obama: Sequester Your Talking Points

To The Dismay Of Obama And The White House, The Sequester Did Not Put The Nation Into A State Of Post-Apocalyptic Disorder

“The Obama Administration Has Overreached Three Times In The Past 10 Days In Attempting To Illustrate The Negative Impact Of The Sequester Spending Cuts In The Short Term...” “The Obama administration has overreached three times in the past 10 days in attempting to illustrate the negative impact of the sequester spending cuts in the short term, giving fodder to those seeking to play down the impact of the cuts.” (Brian Montopoli, “Obama Administration Struggles To Illustrate Pain From Sequester,” [CBS News](#), 3/6/13)

THE ADMINISTRATION’S “PARADE OF INSTANT HORRORS” NEVER MATERIALIZED

Obama Portrayed The Sequester Cuts “As A Parade Of Instant Horrors — Hellish Waits At Airports, A Quick Cascade Of Private Job Losses Resulting From Voided Federal Contracts, Teachers Immediately Sacked.” “Over the past few days, Obama and his team have pulled back from a kick-off strategy that portrayed the \$84 billion in automatic cuts this year as a parade of instant horrors — hellish waits at airports, a quick cascade of private job losses resulting from voided federal contracts, teachers immediately sacked.” (Glenn Thrush and Carrie Budoff Brown, “Now Dems Worry: Did President Obama Cry Wolf?,” [Politico](#), 3/6/13)

In Obama’s Attempt To Avert The Sequester, Many Democrats Are Worried That He “Undermined That Effort With An Early Strategy Marred By Hype, Poor Planning And Muddled Messaging.”

“President Barack Obama hopes to spark a pitchfork revolt against Republicans over sequester-induced budget cuts — but many Democrats fret that he’s undermined that effort with an early strategy marred by hype, poor planning and muddled messaging. The stakes in the sequester debate aren’t quite as high as they were during the debt ceiling battle of 2011, but Democratic veterans of the Obama-Republican wars of 2009 and 2010 are getting a creepy sense of déjà vu from a White House messaging shop they believe fumbled the rollouts of the stimulus and health care initiatives.” (Glenn Thrush and Carrie Budoff Brown, “Now Dems Worry: Did President Obama Cry Wolf?,” [Politico](#), 3/6/13)

Former Obama Campaign Surrogate Gov. Ed Rendell: “I Think They Probably Went Over The Top In Terms Of Saying That The Consequences Were Going To Be Horrible, Especially Because It’s Happened And The Lines In The Airports Aren’t Long, The World Hasn’t Changed Overnight.” “I

think they probably went over the top in terms of saying that the consequences were going to be horrible, especially because it's happened and the lines in the airports aren't long, the world hasn't changed overnight,' says former Pennsylvania Gov. Ed Rendell, an on-again, off-again Obama critic who supports the broad outlines of Obama's \$4 trillion 'grand bargain' proposal." (Glenn Thrush and Carrie Budoff Brown, "Now Dems Worry: Did President Obama Cry Wolf?," [Politico](#), 3/6/13)

Top Congressional Democrat Aide: "They Spent Two Weeks Building Up Sequester As A Horror Show And Then Got Fact-Checked A Dozen Times And Were Forced To Back Off Their Own Claims..." "One top Democratic Congressional aide offered this bit of advice to Obama: 'Don't accentuate a fight you don't intend to wage [and] can't win. ... They spent two weeks building up sequester as a horror show and then got fact-checked a dozen times and were forced to back off their own claims of it being a disaster once they were forced to acquiesce to the cuts happening.'" (Glenn Thrush and Carrie Budoff Brown, "Now Dems Worry: Did President Obama Cry Wolf?," [Politico](#), 3/6/13)

When Asked Whether Obama Bears Any Responsibility For Sequestration, Rep. Joaquin Castro (D-TX) Said "Absolutely." "'Let me get back to my question,' I said. 'Does the president have any responsibility?' 'Oh, absolutely,' Castro replied, 'absolutely.' 'What could [Obama] have done better?' 'I think that he needs to be a leader in the negotiation, that he has a responsibility to bring both sides to the table, to be clear about what he's offered and what he expects from the other side,' the freshman said." (Ron Fournier, "Rising Democratic Star Says Obama 'Needs To Be A Leader' On Budget," [National Journal](#), 3/6/13)

Even The Implementation Of Taxes And Fees In ObamaCare Will Not Be Impacted Due To Sequestration. "Implementation of the taxes and fees from President Obama's healthcare law is on track despite the cutbacks at the IRS from sequestration. The Affordable Care Act (ACA), enacted in 2010 and derided by Republicans as 'ObamaCare,' contains the broadest set of tax changes enacted in some two decades — more than 40 alterations in all, including penalties on people who choose not to purchase insurance. But while IRS and Treasury officials have warned of reduced services as employees are furloughed under the sequester, neither agency has expressed any concern that the automatic spending cuts would delay the rollout of the healthcare overhaul. A spokesman for the IRS declined to comment any further on the agency's concerns about sequestration." (Bernie Becker and Sam Baker, "Sequester Won't Interrupt Collection Of Taxes From 'ObamaCare,'" [The Hill's On The Money](#), 3/6/13)

THE OBAMA ADMINISTRATION'S CLAIMS OF THE SEQUESTER'S IMPACT DID NOT STAND UP TO SCRUTINY WHEN THEY WERE UTTERED

Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano Told Reporters That Major Airports Had Seen Lines Ballooning To 150-200 Percent Their Normal Size. "On Monday, Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano told reporters that major airports had seen lines ballooning to 150-200 percent their normal size." (Brian Montopoli, "Obama Administration Struggles To Illustrate Pain From Sequester," [CBS News](#), 3/6/13)

- **TSA Later Stated That Checkpoint Lines Were Not Yet Extraordinary, And That Only Two Airports Had Been Affected Due To Reduced Staffing.** "The Transportation Security Administration later clarified that it was not yet seeing longer-than-normal checkpoint lines, though Customs and Border Protection told CBS News there had been increased wait times at two airports due to reduced staffing." (Brian Montopoli, "Obama Administration Struggles To Illustrate Pain From Sequester," [CBS News](#), 3/6/13)
- **Officials From A Dozen Major Airports Reported That There Were No Noticeable Impacts On Wait Times Due To The Sequester.** "On Monday, however, officials representing a dozen

major airports said there were few if any unusual flight delays or lines at security or customs checkpoints. Since the sequester started Friday, 'we haven't seen any delays out of the ordinary,' said Bob Rotiski, duty manager at San Francisco International Airport. A Miami airport spokesman confirmed the customs delays on Saturday, but a JFK airport spokesman said he hadn't received any reports of unusually long lines since Friday. Both said there were no issues on Monday." (Jack Nicas and Susan Carey, "Airports See Few Problems Thus Far," [The Wall Street Journal](#), 3/5/13)

Obama Said That Janitors At The U.S. Capitol Would Receive A Pay Cut Due To The Sequester Cuts.

OBAMA: "Starting tomorrow, everybody here, all the folks who are cleaning the floors at the Capitol -- now that Congress has left, somebody is going to be vacuuming and cleaning those floors and throwing out the garbage -- they're going to have less pay. The janitors, the security guards, they just got a pay cut, and they've got to figure out how to manage that. That's real." (President Barack Obama, [Remarks On The Sequester](#), Washington, D.C., 3/6/13)

- **Obama's Claim Immediately Prompted The Superintendent Of The U.S. Capitol Building to Email All Of His Employees Clarifying That "This Is NOT TRUE."** "The president's mention prompted Carlos Elias, the superintendent of the U.S. Capitol building and the Capitol Visitors Center, to email his employees within hours of Mr. Obama's comment. 'The pay and benefits of EACH of our employees WILL NOT be impacted,' Elias wrote. 'There was a specific mention in the news today by a high ranking official that said 'The employees that clean and maintain the US Capitol will receive a cut in pay' (not specific quote but very close to it),' Elias continued. 'This is NOT TRUE,' wrote Elias. 'Therefore, I request that you please notify all of our employees about the importance of ignoring media reports.'" (Brian Montopoli, "Obama Administration Struggles To Illustrate Pain From Sequester," [CBS News](#), 3/6/13)
- **The Washington Post's The Fact Checker Gave The White House's Attempts To Clarify Obama's Remarks Four Pinocchios, Saying That "Rather Than Admit An Error, White House Aides Doubled Down On Their Talking Points..."** "But a clean-up brigade shouldn't simply try to deflect and obfuscate. Apparently, the president assumed — incorrectly — that the janitors on Capitol Hill would get a pay cut. Rather than admit an error, White House aides doubled down on their talking points about overtime being essential to their livelihood, without actually knowing the truth." (Glenn Kessler, "Capitol Janitors Making 'Ends Meet' With Overtime? Nope," [The Washington Post's The Fact Checker](#), 3/6/13)

During A Press Briefing With White House Press Secretary Jay Carney, Education Secretary Arne Duncan Made Remarks On The Sequester That Included A Claim That Teachers Were Already Getting Pink Slips.

SECRETARY ARNE DUNCAN: "All of those cuts I walked through -- the early childhood piece, the K-12 piece, the higher ed piece -- those are all cuts that would be hitting in the fall. So there's lots of churn now, lots of -- over the next month or two you'll see lots of pink slips go out. That starting is still really early on. It's usually March and April where that happens, but these are all things that would happen for the fall. ... And then, sorry, quickly -- in that district, to be clear, it's Title I teachers and Head Start teachers. So it's these funding sources that are going to get cut. Whether it's all sequester related, I don't know. But these are teachers who are getting pink slips now." ([Press Briefing](#), Washington, D.C., 2/27/13)

- **Duncan Later "Offered A Mea Culpa," Admitting That He Misspoke.** "Education Secretary Arne Duncan offered a mea culpa of sorts Monday, saying that he misspoke on national television last week when he said that teachers were already losing jobs as a result of the budget sequester. 'When I said 'pink slips' that was probably the wrong word,' Duncan told reporters at a news

conference related to the sequester. 'Language matters, and I need to be very, very clear.'" (Lyndsey Layton, Education Secretary Arne Duncan Says He Misspoke Concerning Pink Slips," [The Washington Post](#), 3/4/13)