



Obama's Sequester Takes Effect

As Sequester Goes Into Effect, A Look Back At How Obama's Failures In Leadership Got Us To Where We Are

OBAMA STRAINS CREDIBILITY ON SEQUESTRATION CLAIMS

"Sequester Spin Gets Ahead Of Reality." (Karen Tumulty and Lyndsey Layton, "Sequester Spin Gets Ahead Of Reality," [The Washington Post](#), 2/27/13)

- **"The Descriptions Of The Post-Sequester Landscape Coming From The Obama Administration Have Been Alarming, Specific — And, In At Least Some Cases, Hyped."** (Karen Tumulty and Lyndsey Layton, "Sequester Spin Gets Ahead Of Reality," [The Washington Post](#), 2/27/13)

The Washington Post's Fact Checker: "The Administration Has Been On Thin Ice With Some Of Its Claims About The Impact Of The Sequestration Cuts." (Glenn Kessler, "4 Pinocchios For Arne Duncan's False Claim Of 'Pink Slips' For Teachers," [The Washington Post's Fact Checker](#), 2/27/13)

The Obama Administration's Predictions Are "Guesswork At Best." "But many of the reductions, such as those in education spending, will not be felt for months in most school systems, which gives individual districts some time to make adjustments and allow-ances for the lost funds. That means the administration's dire projection that 'as many as 40,000 teachers could lose their jobs' is guesswork at best; most school districts will not start sending out layoff notices for the next school year until around May." (Karen Tumulty and Lyndsey Layton, "Sequester Spin Gets Ahead Of Reality," [The Washington Post](#), 2/27/13)

Education Secretary Arne Duncan Repeatedly Made Over-Hyped And Inaccurate Claims About Teacher Layoffs

Education Secretary Arne Duncan Claimed That Teacher Layoffs Have Begun, But "School Administrators Say No Pink Slips Are Expected Before May, For The Next School Year." "Warnings of thousands of teacher layoffs, for example, are made with the presumption that local communities would not step in with their own dollars — perhaps from higher taxes — to keep teachers in the classrooms if federal money is not soon restored. Education Secretary Arne Duncan says teacher layoffs have already begun, but he has not backed up that claim and school administrators say no pink slips are expected before May, for the next school year." (Calvin Woodward, "SPIN METER: In Budget Fight, Sky Is Falling Again," [The Associated Press](#), 2/26/13)

Duncan Later Admitted That He Didn't Know If Teacher Layoffs Were Even Related To The Sequester. EDUCATION SECRETARY ARNE DUNCAN: "Then sorry, quickly, that district to be clear, it's

Title One teachers and Head Start teachers. So it's these funding sources that will be cut. Whether it's all sequester related, I don't know. But these are teachers who are getting pink slips." (Education Secretary Arne Duncan, [White House Press Briefing](#), Washington, DC, 2/27/13)

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The Washington Post's Fact Checker Gave Duncan 4 Pinocchios For His Inaccurate Pink-Slip Claims. "There is little debate that across-the-board spending cuts in education funding will cause pain for some schools and states. But there is no reason to hype the statistics — or to make scary pronouncements on pink slips being issued based on misinformation. Indeed, Duncan's lack of seriousness about being scrupulously factual undercuts the administration's claim that the cuts are a serious problem." (Glenn Kessler, "4 Pinocchios For Arne Duncan's False Claim Of 'Pink Slips' For Teachers," [The Washington Post's Fact Checker](#), 2/27/13)

- **The Washington Post's Fact Checker: "Duncan's Assertion That 'As Many As 40,000 Teachers Could Lose Their Jobs' Also Appears To Be Hyperbole."** "Duncan's assertion that 'as many as 40,000 teachers could lose their jobs' also appears to be hyperbole. An aide to Duncan described it as a 'rough back-of-the-envelope calculation,' derived by dividing the average pay and benefits of a teacher — \$70,000 — by the amount — \$2.8 billion — that needed to be cut in education programs. But that amounts to false precision. Teacher salaries vary greatly across the nation, and within districts. School districts and states may find many ways to juggle funds or reduce expenses to avoid losing many teachers, which is what has happened during previous periods of financial stress." (Glenn Kessler, "4 Pinocchios For Arne Duncan's False Claim Of 'Pink Slips' For Teachers," [The Washington Post's Fact Checker](#), 2/27/13)

THE DEMOCRATS' REPLACEMENT FOR THE SEQUESTER ACTUALLY INCREASES THE DEFICIT

Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) Unveiled The "American Family Economic Protection Act" To Replace The Sequester. "Today, Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, unveiled the American Family Economic Protection Act -- legislation to replace the indiscriminate, across the board federal spending cuts known as 'the sequester' with an alternative deficit reduction proposal that includes a balanced mix of spending cuts and revenue increases." (Press Release, "Summary Of The American Family Economic Protection Act," [Senate Finance Committee](#), 2/27/13)

Obama Backs The Democrat Bill, Despite The Fact That It Would Increase Deficits. "White House-backed legislation in the Senate to replace \$85 billion in across-the-board spending cuts would raise the deficit through the end of the budget year by tens of billions of dollars, officials said late Wednesday as the two parties maneuvered for public support on economic issues." (David Espo, "Senate Dems' Bill Light On Deficit Cuts In 2013," [The Associated Press](#), 2/28/13)

- **The Congressional Budget Office Estimated That The Plan Would Increase The Deficit By \$7.2 Billion.** "S. 388 would eliminate the automatic spending reductions scheduled to occur under current law for 2013 and would partially eliminate the reductions scheduled for 2014. The bill also would eliminate direct payments to certain agricultural producers, provide funding for agricultural disaster assistance, and exempt from sequestration all mandatory funding provided for the Department of Agriculture. In addition, S. 388 would ensure that taxpayers with annual income above \$5 million face an average tax rate of at least 30 percent on their income, and it would extend an existing per-barrel tax on oil production to oil produced from tar sands. CBO and the staff of the Joint Committee on Taxation (JCT) estimate that enacting the bill would increase budget deficits from changes in direct spending and revenues by \$7.2 billion over the 2013-2023

period.” (“S. 388: American Family Economic Protection Act Of 2013,” [Congressional Budget Office](#), 2/27/13)

OBAMA’S WHITE HOUSE MUST HAVE OVERLOOKED THE SEEMINGLY APOCALYPTIC RAMIFICATIONS OF THE SEQUESTER WHEN THEY PROPOSED IT IN THE FIRST PLACE

The Obama Administration Proposed The Sequester And Decided That Half Of The Cuts Would Come From The Defense Budget. “Lew, Nabors, Sperling and Bruce Reed, Biden’s chief of staff, had initially decided to propose using language from the 1985 Gramm-Rudman-Hollings deficit reduction law as the model for the trigger. It seemed tough enough to apply to the current situation. It would require a sequester with half the cuts from Defense, and the other half from domestic programs. There would be no chance the Republicans would want to pull the trigger and allow the sequester to force massive cuts to Defense.” (Bob Woodward, *The Price Of Politics*, 2012, p. 341)

- **White House In 2011: “We Have An Idea For The Trigger. ... Sequestration.”** “At 2:30 p.m. Lew and Nabors went to the Senate to meet with Reid and his chief of staff, David Krone. ‘We have an idea for the trigger,’ Lew said. ‘What’s the idea?’ Reid asked skeptically. ‘Sequestration.’ Reid bent down and put his head between his knees, almost as if he were going to throw up or was having a heart attack. He sat back up and looked at the ceiling. ‘A couple of weeks ago,’ he said, ‘my staff said to me that there is one more possible’ enforcement mechanism: sequestration. He said he told them, ‘Get the hell out of here. That’s insane. The White House surely will come up with a plan that will save the day. And you come to me with sequestration?’ Well, it could work, Lew and Nabors explained. What would the impact be? They would design it so that half the threatened cuts would be from the Defense Department. ‘I like that,’ Reid said. ‘That’s good. It doesn’t touch Medicaid or Medicare, does it?’ It actually does touch Medicare, they replied. ‘How does it touch Medicare?’ It depends, they said. There’s versions with 2 percent cuts, and there’s versions with 4 percent cuts.” (Bob Woodward, *The Price Of Politics*, 2012, pp. 326)

In 2011, Obama Promised To “Veto Any Effort To Get Rid Of Those Automatic Spending Cuts To Domestic And Defense Spending.” OBAMA: “Already some in Congress are trying to undo these automatic spending cuts. My message to them is simple: No. I will veto any effort to get rid of those automatic spending cuts to domestic and defense spending. There will be no easy off ramps on this one. We need to keep the pressure up to compromise, not turn off the pressure.” (President Barack Obama, [Statement On The Supercommittee](#), Washington, DC, 11/21/11)

- **Obama: “The Only Way These Spending Cuts Will Not Take Place Is If Congress Gets Back To Work And Agrees On A Balanced Plan To Reduce The Deficit By At Least \$1.2 Trillion.”** OBAMA: “The only way these spending cuts will not take place is if Congress gets back to work and agrees on a balanced plan to reduce the deficit by at least \$1.2 trillion. That’s exactly what they need to do. That’s the job they promised to do. And they’ve still got a year to figure it out.” (President Barack Obama, [Statement On The Supercommittee](#), Washington, DC, 11/21/11)

White House Press Secretary Jay Carney In 2011: “The American People Deserve To Have Their Leaders Come Together And Make The Tough Choices Necessary To Live Within Our Means.” WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY JAY CARNEY: “The President also made clear that he will not accept any measure that attempts to turn off part of the sequester. The sequester was agreed to by both parties to ensure there was a meaningful enforcement mechanism to force a result from the committee. Congress must not shirk its responsibilities. The American people deserve to have their leaders come together and make the tough choices necessary to live within our means, just as American families do every day in

these tough economic times.” (Jay Carney, Press Gaggle Aboard Air Force One, [En Route San Diego, CA](#), 11/11/11)

OBAMA’S HANDS-OFF APPROACH TO THE SEQUESTER CONFIRMS HIS FAILURE TO LEAD

Despite Having Had The Time For Nearly A Year And A Half, Obama Waited To Meet With Congressional Leaders To Avert Sequestration Until The Day The Cuts Were Supposed To Take Effect. “President Obama will meet with congressional leaders at the White House on Friday to discuss preventing the automatic spending cuts set to take place that day, an administration official confirmed. The meeting comes as efforts to resolve the so-called ‘sequester’ have stalled. With the deadline looming, Obama has not had a face-to-face meeting with leaders on the issue. Last week, he placed calls to congressional leaders to discuss the impending \$85 billion in across-the-board spending cuts.” (Amie Parnes, “Obama To Meet With Leaders On Sequester The Day Cuts Take Effect,” [The Hill](#), 2/27/13)

Bob Woodward: Obama’s Lack Of Leadership On The Sequester Is “Madness.” BOB WOODWARD: “Joe, I mean, this will resonate with you, I think. Can you imagine Ronald Reagan sitting there and saying oh, by the way, I can’t do this because of some budget document or George W. Bush saying, you know, I’m not going to invade Iraq because I can’t get the aircraft carriers I need or even Bill Clinton saying, you know, I’m not going to attack Saddam Hussein’s intelligence headquarters, as he did when Clinton was president because of some budget document? Under the constitution, the President is commander in chief and employs the force. And so we now have the president going out because of this piece of paper and this agreement, I can’t do what I need to do to protect the country. That’s a kind of madness that I haven’t seen in a long time.” (MSNBC’s “Morning Joe,” 2/28/13)

- ***The Washington Post: The Battle Over The Sequester “Makes The Minimal Presidential Leadership On Entitlement Reform So Baffling.”*** “Much of what President Obama hopes to accomplish in his second term would tap into what’s known as the ‘discretionary budget’ — money not already claimed by entitlement programs such as Medicare and Social Security. But the discretionary budget itself is about tapped out, squeezed by the growth of entitlement spending. That’s what makes the minimal presidential leadership on entitlement reform so baffling.” (Editorial, “Sequester Offers President Obama A Time To Lead,” [The Washington Post](#), 2/25/13)