



Runaways

As Obama Embraces Congressional Democrats, Many Members Of His Party Are Sprinting The Other Way

Obama Is Meeting With House Democrats Today For A “Roundtable Discussion,” And He Is Addressing Senate Democrats Tomorrow At Their Annual Retreat. “President Obama will host House Democrats at the White House next Tuesday for a ‘roundtable discussion,’ press secretary Jay Carney announced on Friday. ... Obama will be meeting with Democrats from the upper chamber again on Wednesday, when he’s scheduled to address their annual retreat at Nationals Park.” (Justin Sink, “Obama To Huddle With House Dems,” [The Hill](#), 1/13/14)

DEMOCRATS ARE PUBLICLY BREAKING WITH OBAMA ON A HOST OF ISSUES

Democratic Members Of Congress Are Increasingly Breaking With Obama And His Agenda.

“President Barack Obama is counting on Senate Democrats to help approve his legislative agenda during his final years in office. And though they are his staunchest allies on most economic issues, many Democratic senators are breaking with him on key issues in very public ways. From trade to Iran sanctions, the Keystone XL pipeline, ObamaCare, the National Security Agency and energy policy, Senate Democrats seem unusually comfortable criticizing the president, with only minimal concerns about repercussions from the White House.” (Burgess Everett, “Senate Democrats Break From Obama,” [Politico](#), 2/2/14)

- **“But Beneath The Surface Of Party Unity, Democratic Critics Appear Not To Think Twice Before Criticizing Obama Nearly Everywhere Else He Turns.”** (Burgess Everett, “Senate Democrats Break From Obama,” [Politico](#), 2/2/14)

“From Trade To Iran Sanctions, The Keystone XL Pipeline, Obamacare, The National Security Agency And Energy Policy, Senate Democrats Seem Unusually Comfortable Criticizing The President...” “President Barack Obama is counting on Senate Democrats to help approve his legislative agenda during his final years in office. And though they are his staunchest allies on most economic issues, many Democratic senators are breaking with him on key issues in very public ways. From trade to Iran sanctions, the Keystone XL pipeline, Obamacare, the National Security Agency and energy policy, Senate Democrats seem unusually comfortable criticizing the president, with only minimal concerns about repercussions from the White House.” (Burgess Everett, “Senate Democrats Break From Obama,” [Politico](#), 2/2/14)

Obama’s Own Senate Majority Leader Is Blocking His Trade Agenda

Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid Opposes Obama’s Push To Fast-Track Pending Free Trade Agreements With Europe And Asia. “Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid broke publicly with the White House Wednesday on trade policy, instantly imperiling two major international trade deals and punching a hole in one piece of the economic agenda the president outlined in his State of the Union address a day

earlier. Mr. Reid told reporters he opposed legislation aimed at smoothing the passage of free-trade agreements, a vital component to negotiating any deal, and pointedly said supporters should back down.” (William Mauldin and Siobhan Hughes, “Reid Deals Body Blow To Obama On Trade,” [The Wall Street Journal](#), 1/29/14)

- **Reid’s Opposition Is A “One-Two Punch Against Trade Policy,” And Means “You Can Kiss Any New Trade Deals Goodbye.”** “Mr. Reid declined to say whether he would stop fast-track legislation from coming up for a Senate floor vote, but other senators said his opposition was important. ‘You can kiss any new trade deals goodbye,’ said Sen. John Cornyn (R., Texas.) ‘I think the majority leader’s focus is on the November elections and he doesn’t want to expose his vulnerable members to controversial votes.’ Added Gary Hufbauer, senior trade expert at the Peterson Institute for International Economics in Washington: ‘It’s a one-two punch against trade policy,’ he said. (William Mauldin and Siobhan Hughes, “Reid Deals Body Blow To Obama On Trade,” [The Wall Street Journal](#), 1/29/14)

Reid’s Opposition Came Just 24 Hours After Obama Called For Fast Track Authority In His State Of The Union. “The unusually blunt public opposition came less than 24 hours after Obama noted the need for fast-track power in his State of the Union address, albeit less forcefully than business lobbyists and pro-trade Republicans would have liked. The White House called Reid’s office shortly after his comments to voice displeasure, a top Democratic party aide said. ‘They were really upset,’ the aide said. But the aide said the White House did not try to get Reid to shift his position.” (Krista Hughes and Thomas Ferraro, “Analysis: White House Hopes For Fast-Track Trade Hit Political Tangle,” [Reuters](#), 1/30/14)

Obama’s Fellow Democrats Are Deriding His Energy Policies

Sen. Joe Manchin (D-WV) Slammed Obama’s Delay On Keystone In January, Saying It “Just Doesn’t Make Any Sense, None At All.” “The West Virginia lawmaker warned that if the Obama administration failed to approve the Keystone XL Pipeline, fellow Democrats could face electoral consequences in the upcoming midterm elections. ‘It makes it harder for a Democrat to defend some of the Washington Democrat’s agenda,’ Manchin said, adding that President Obama’s delay in deciding the pipeline’s fate ‘just doesn’t make any sense, none at all.’” (Adam O’Neal, “Manchin Takes Fellow Dems To Task On Energy,” [RealClearPolitics](#), 1/15/14)

Sen. Heidi Heitkamp (D-ND) Described Obama’s Energy Policy As “Schizophrenic” In A Recent Interview. “Even media-shy senators like Heidi Heitkamp of North Dakota feel strongly enough about Obama’s energy rhetoric in the SOTU to pipe up on the issue. In a rare interview, Heitkamp called Obama’s energy policies ‘schizophrenic’ and not helpful to her state, which is booming from energy production. She also said the White House’s energy policy has many more flaws than simply failing to approve Keystone.” (Burgess Everett, “Senate Democrats Break From Obama,” [Politico](#), 2/2/14)

- **Heitkamp: “He Talks About The Great News Where We Now Cross The Line Where We’re Producing More Than We’re Importing. Well, That Happened Because Of Tax Policies And Innovations. Yet He Would Dismantle And Unravel Those Policies.”** (Burgess Everett, “Senate Democrats Break From Obama,” [Politico](#), 2/2/14)

Democrat Unity Continues To Fray On ObamaCare

One-Third Of The House Democrat Caucus Went Against Obama To Support ObamaCare Security Measures In January. “Dozens of House Democrats broke ranks with President Obama on Friday to support legislation that would require people to be notified of security breaches under ObamaCare. The House passed the Health Exchange Security and Transparency Act, H.R. 3811, in a 291-122 vote. Sixty-seven Democrats voted for the bill, ignoring arguments from party leaders that the bill was a “messaging” vote meant to discourage people from signing up for insurance.” (Pete Kasperowicz, “House Democrats Break Ranks With The White House On ObamaCare Vote,” [The Hill](#), 1/10/14)

- **The White House Had Formally Opposed The Bill.** “The administration opposes House passage of H.R. 3811 because it would create unrealistic and costly paperwork requirements that do not improve the safety or security of personally-identifiable information in the Health Insurance Marketplaces,’ the White House said in a policy statement.” (Pete Kasperowicz, “House Democrats Break Ranks With The White House On ObamaCare Vote,” [The Hill](#), 1/10/14)

33 House Democrats Voted In January To Force The Obama Administration To Provide Weekly Updates On ObamaCare. “The House voted Thursday to require weekly updates from the Obama administration about the implementation and operation of ObamaCare and its website, HealthCare.gov. Members passed the Exchange Information Disclosure Act in a 259-154 vote. And while many Democrats criticized the bill as another GOP attack on ObamaCare, it won the support of 33 Democrats in the final vote.” (Pete Kasperowicz, “House Passes Measure Requiring O-Care Updates; 33 Dems Defect,” [The Hill](#), 1/16/14)

DEMOCRATS AREN'T JUST RUNNING AWAY FROM HIS POLICIES, THEY'RE RUNNING AWAY FROM OBAMA HIMSELF

Wisconsin Democratic Gubernatorial Candidate Mary Burke Skipped Obama's Speech In Waukesha, Wisconsin Last Thursday. “Democratic gubernatorial candidate Mary Burke will be campaigning in western Wisconsin later this week and won't join President Barack Obama when he's on the other side of the state, her campaign spokesman said Tuesday. Obama plans to tour a General Electric gas engine plant in Waukesha to talk about the economy on Thursday morning. It is part of a four-state swing following his State of the Union speech. Obama originally was scheduled to stay in Milwaukee on Wednesday night, but his plans changed, limiting Thursday's visit to about three hours.” (Scott Bauer, “Burke Won't Join Obama For Waukesha Visit,” [The Associated Press](#), 1/28/14)

- **Burke Was Invited, But Decided She Would Rather Campaign On The Other Side Of The State Than Be Seen With Obama.** “Democratic candidate for governor Mary Burke was invited to the event being held by President Barack Obama in his Thursday visit, but was unable to attend, a spokesman said. ‘Mary Burke has a full day scheduled in western Wisconsin Thursday and will not be able to join the president during his visit to Wisconsin,’ said spokesman Joe Zepecki, who did not specify when the invitation was made.” (“Mary Burke Speaks With Obama But Isn't Attending Thursday's Visit,” [Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel](#), 1/29/14)

Obama Gave A Speech In The Pittsburgh Area Last Week... “President Barack Obama reminded Congress on Tuesday night that he has a pen, and he wielded it Wednesday as he came to U.S. Steel's Irvin plant to sign an order establishing a new plan for retirement savings. The campaign-style appearance before an invited crowd of more than 1,000 plant workers and supporters was one of a series of post-State-of-the-Union appearances by the Democratic president intended to thaw the policy impasse in Washington, D.C., and restore the administration's momentum in the face of Republican resistance and his own lagging poll numbers.” (James O'Toole, “President Obama Delivers Speech In West Mifflin,” [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#), 1/29/14)

- **...But Democrat Gubernatorial Candidate Allyson Schwartz Was Nowhere To Be Found.** “It doesn't look like Allyson Schwartz or other PA D Gov candidates are at Obama speech” (Zeke Miller, [Twitter Feed](#), 1/29/14)

Following The State Of The Union, Sen. Mark Udall (D-CO) Refused To Say Whether He Would Have Obama Campaign For Him As He Seeks Reelection This Year. BASH: “Is he a liability for you, the president back home?” UDALL: “When the President comes to Colorado, and talks about our all of the above energy approach, we've got lots of natural gas and solar power, that resonates with Coloradans. When he talks about making sure our veterans are treated properly, that resonates with Coloradans.” BASH: “Does that mean you're going to campaign with him, or you're going to have him campaign with

you side by side?” UDALL: “We are going to be running a strong campaign based on Colorado’s interests and Colorado’s future. my job, I think, is to protect Colorado’s way of life.” (Sen. Mark Udall, [CNN Interview](#), 1/28/14)

- **Udall Was Given A Second Chance To Answer The Question, And Dodged Again.** BASH: “That was not a yes or no. Yes or no?” UDALL: “We’ll see what the president’s schedule is, we’ll see what my schedule is. But Coloradans are going to re-elect me based on my record, not the President’s record. Not what the President’s done, but what I’ve done and how I’ve stood up for Coloradans. That’s the case I’m going to make to Coloradans.” (Sen. Mark Udall, [CNN Interview](#), 1/28/14)
- **Even A Third Chance Was Not Enough To Get Udall To Say Whether He Would Campaign With Obama.** BASH: “Wow, one more chance, you’re not going to say yes or no, are you?” UDALL: “We’ll see what the schedule allows. I’m running for reelection, and not the President, in Colorado.” BASH: “Wolf, I think that’s our answer.” (Sen. Mark Udall, [CNN Interview](#), 1/28/14)

Sen. Mark Begich (D-AK): “I’m Not Really Interested In Campaigning” With Obama. “But Begich, the Democrat from red-state Alaska who faces a challenging bid for second term in the Senate, feels differently. ‘I’m not really interested in campaigning’ with Obama if the President came to Alaska, he said. ‘If he wants to come up there and learn about Alaska, bring it on. I’ll drag him around, I’ll show him what he ever he wants to see, but I want to show him and convince him some of his policies are not the right direction. I don’t need him campaigning for me. I need him to change some of his policies,’ Begich told Bash and CNN Chief Washington Correspondent Jake Tapper soon after Tuesday’s State of the Union address.” (Paul Steinhauser, “Is Obama Toxic To Democrats Facing Tough Re-Elections?” [CNN](#), 1/29/14)

Sen. Kay Hagan (D-NC) Skipped Obama’s Speech In Raleigh Last Month. “One of North Carolina’s most prominent Democrats doesn’t plan to attend President Barack Obama’s speech Wednesday in Raleigh. A spokeswoman for U.S. Sen. Kay Hagan said Monday the senator won’t be at the president’s event on the North Carolina State University campus because she’ll be in Washington as the Senate meets this week.” (“Hagan Will Stay In DC While Obama Travels To NC,” [The Associated Press](#), 1/13/14)

- **CNN’s Brianna Keilar Called Hagan’s Excuse “The Congressional Equivalent Of ‘I Can’t Go, I’m Washing My Hair.’”** CNN’s BRIANNA KEILAR: “I know you’re saying her office has addressed this – that she’s here, and the Senate’s in session. But I think people take that as the congressional equivalent of ‘I can’t go, I’m washing my hair.’” ([White House Daily Press Briefing](#), 1/14/14)
- **Hagan Was Asked Last Week If Obama Would Help Or Hurt Her Campaign And She Refused To Answer.** REPORTER: “Senator, I’ve got to ask you, do you think that the President, at the end of this campaign, will he help or hurt your chances of reelection?” HAGAN: “You know, I think this issue on my race is about who is going to speak for North Carolinians. This seat is not for sale...” REPORTER: “Senator Hagan’s reply went on for another 45 seconds, talking about constituent services, job creation, and the need for both parties to work together. But she never once answered the question: will the President help or hurt her campaign.” ([WXII 12](#), 1/31/14)

Sen. Mary Landrieu (D-LA), Didn’t Join Obama At His New Orleans Speech In November. “When President Barack Obama appears at the Port of New Orleans tomorrow, he won’t be joined by Louisiana’s only statewide elected Democrat, U.S. Sen. Mary Landrieu.” (Julia O’Donoghue, “Sen. Landrieu Won’t Appear With Obama At Port Of New Orleans,” [The Times-Picayune](#), 11/7/13)

- **Landrieu Rode Down To Louisiana With Obama On Air Force One, But Claimed She Couldn’t Appear With Him Due To A “Long-Standing Engagement” Elsewhere.** “Landrieu will travel with Obama to New Orleans on the president’s plane, Air Force One, but she doesn’t plan to attend his speech about boosting exports. The U.S. Senator has a long-standing engagement in Lake

Charles that takes place at the same time and she can't be in both places at once, staff said." (Julia O'Donoghue, "Sen. Landrieu Won't Appear With Obama At Port Of New Orleans," [The Times-Picayune](#), 11/7/13)

WHY WOULDN'T DEMOCRATS BREAK WITH OBAMA? HE'S DESTROYED THEIR CHANCE TO RETAKE THE HOUSE, AND HE MAY COST THEM THE SENATE AS WELL

Democrats Are Giving Up On Any Chance To Retake The House In 2014, And Pouring Everything Into Trying To Hold The Senate. "With Democrats' grasp on the Senate increasingly tenuous — and the House all but beyond reach — some top party donors and strategists are moving to do something in the midterm election as painful as it is coldblooded: Admit the House can't be won and go all in to save the Senate." (Alex Isenstadt, "Democrats: Cede The House To Save The Senate," [Politico](#), 1/29/14)

- **The Unpopularity Of Obama And ObamaCare Have Made Retaking The House all But Impossible.** "It's a delicate decision for Democrats and one they are not taking lightly. None of them wants to surrender the House to Republicans for another two years, leaving Speaker John Boehner (R-Ohio) and a rowdy band of tea party lawmakers in charge. Ceding ground to Republicans this year would make it that much harder for the party to win back the House in 2016, which could be a more favorable year for Democrats. But with their party weighted down by an unpopular president and his even more unpopular health care law, many Democrats are worried about the election. And their anxiety is most pronounced about the Senate." (Alex Isenstadt, "Democrats: Cede The House To Save The Senate," [Politico](#), 1/29/14)

The Washington Post's Chris Cillizza: "If The 2014 Election Is A Referendum On President Obama, Democrats Are In Deep Trouble." "If the 2014 election is a referendum on President Obama, Democrats are in deep trouble. That's according to a new state-by-state study of Obama's job approval ratings released by Gallup that puts Obama's disapproval rating at over 50 percent in 10 of the 21 states where Democrats are defending Senate seat this fall. And in many of those states, Republicans have recruited strong candidates and are preparing to spend big bucks to win the six seats they need to regain the majority." (Chris Cillizza, "2014 Senate Races May Be A Referendum On Obama; If So, Democrats Should Worry," [The Washington Post](#), 2/2/14)

Obama's Disapproval Rating Is Above 50 Percent In Ten States With Competitive Senate Elections This Year. "Obama is deeply unpopular — with a disapproval rating higher than 55 percent — in five states: West Virginia (67.3 percent disapproval), Montana (60.9 percent), South Dakota (59.3 percent), Arkansas (57 percent) and Alaska (55.4 percent). Beyond those five seats, there is a second tier of states where the president's disapproval rating stands somewhere between 50 percent and 55 percent, including: Iowa (50.1 percent disapproval), New Hampshire (50.2 percent), North Carolina (50.4 percent), Colorado (51.2 percent) and Louisiana (53.9 percent)." (Chris Cillizza, "2014 Senate Races May Be A Referendum On Obama; If So, Democrats Should Worry," [The Washington Post](#), 2/2/14)