



# Second-Term Derailment

## *Obama's Struggles Threaten His Second Term And Democrats' 2014 Elections*

### "OBAMA STRUGGLES WITH ROCKY START TO SECOND TERM"

**"An Outburst Of Controversies Threatens To Swamp President Barack Obama's Second-Term Agenda."** "An outburst of controversies threatens to swamp President Barack Obama's second-term agenda, while giving Republicans new opportunities to galvanize their base ahead of the battle for control of Congress in the 2014 elections." (Peter Nicholas and Janet Hook, "Controversies Threaten President's Agenda," [The Wall Street Journal](#), 5/15/13)

- **"It's Been A Rough Week For The Obama Administration..."** "It's been a rough week for the Obama administration with revelations the Justice Department tracked reporters' phone lines adding to the pressure already building over the response to that attack in Benghazi last September and the IRS's targeting of conservative groups." (Jake Tapper, "Obama's Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Week," [CNN](#), 5/15/13)

**"The Latest Controversies—Internal Revenue Service Probes Of Tea-Party Groups And The Seizure Of A News Organization's Phone Records—Have Provoked Intense, Bipartisan Criticism That Is Hampering Mr. Obama's Efforts To Draw Attention To His Agenda."** (Peter Nicholas and Janet Hook, "Controversies Threaten President's Agenda," [The Wall Street Journal](#), 5/15/13)

- **CNN Headline: "Obama's Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Week."** (Jake Tapper, "Obama's Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Week," [CNN](#), 5/15/13)
- **The Wall Street Journal Headline: "Controversies Threaten President's Agenda."** (Peter Nicholas and Janet Hook, "Controversies Threaten President's Agenda," [The Wall Street Journal](#), 5/15/13)
- **NPR Headline: "Controversies Risk Starving Obama's Agenda Of Air."** (Frank James, "Controversies Risk Starving Obama's Agenda Of Air," [NPR](#), 5/14/13)
- **The Washington Post Headline: "Obama's Second Term Clouded By Controversies."** (Dan Balz, "Obama's Second Term Clouded By Controversies," [The Washington Post](#), 5/14/13)
- **CNN Headline: "Obama Struggles With Rocky Start To Second Term."** (Tom Cohen, "Obama Struggles With Rocky Start To Second Term," [CNN](#), 5/14/13)
- **National Journal Headline: "Does Obama Need Staff Shakeup To Manage Scandals?"** (Ron Fournier, "Does Obama Need Staff Shakeup To Manage Scandals," [National Journal](#), 5/14/13)

**During This “Critical Moment” Of His Second Term, Obama “Had To Make Real Progress On His Second-Term Agenda And Thus Forge His Legacy.”** “This was the critical moment, the brief time between his inaugural and when the nation's collective focus turns to whom his successor will be, when President Obama had to make real progress on his second-term agenda and thus forge his legacy.” (Frank James, “Controversies Risk Starving Obama’s Agenda Of Air,” [NPR](#), 5/14/13)

- **Instead Of Moving His Agenda Forward, Obama Is Mired In Controversies.** “Instead, the president finds his administration, the public, Congress and the news media distracted by controversies over Benghazi, the Internal Revenue Service's targeting of conservative groups and a leak investigation in which the Justice Department secretly obtained months of phone records of Associated Press journalists.” (Frank James, “Controversies Risk Starving Obama’s Agenda Of Air,” [NPR](#), 5/14/13)
- **“The Result? Precious Time White House Officials And Other Democrats Hoped To Spend On Pushing The President’s Goals Is Instead Being Spent On Damage Control, And With Dubious Effect At That.”** (Frank James, “Controversies Risk Starving Obama’s Agenda Of Air,” [NPR](#), 5/14/13)

## **OBAMA IS “BESIEGED” BY SCANDALS THAT ARE THREATENING TO DRIVE HIS AGENDA “SERIOUSLY OFF TRACK”**

**“The White House Was Besieged Tuesday By Three Controversies That Threatened President Obama’s Second-Term Agenda And His Administration’s Credibility.”** (Justin Sink, “Controversies Threaten President Obama’s Second-Term Agenda,” [The Hill](#), 5/14/13)

**The Way Obama Handles His Second-Term Scandals Will Determine Whether He Becomes “Seriously Off Track” In Implementing His Second-Term Agenda.** “He will have to spend some of that precious time trying to clean up unexpected messes that have landed on his desk. How seriously off track his administration is will depend in large part on how skillfully Obama handles what is before him.” (Dan Balz, “Obama’s Second Term Clouded By Controversies,” [The Washington Post](#), 5/14/13)

**“The President And His Advisers Have Tried To Insulate The White House From The Actions Of The IRS And The Justice Department, Claiming Ignorance. The IRS, Officials Argued Friday, Is Quasi-Independent.”** (Dan Balz, “Obama’s Second Term Clouded By Controversies,” [The Washington Post](#), 5/14/13)

- **“It Took The President Three Days To Express His Outrage At The Agency’s Actions.”** (Dan Balz, “Obama’s Second Term Clouded By Controversies,” [The Washington Post](#), 5/14/13)
- **“As For The Justice Department’s Leak Investigation, White House Officials Said Monday Night That It Was A Department Decision That Was Not Forwarded To The President.”** (Dan Balz, “Obama’s Second Term Clouded By Controversies,” [The Washington Post](#), 5/14/13)

**“President Obama And His Insular Team Are Violating Almost Every Principle Of Crisis Management. Shoot Straight. Ditch The Spin. Don’t Feed The Fire. Restore Trust.”** (Ron Fournier, “Does Obama Need Staff Shakeup To Manage Scandals,” [National Journal](#), 5/14/13)

**NBC’s David Gregory: “All Of These Things Taken Together Become At The Very Least A Distraction. ... Any Day You Waste Is A Day You Cannot Get Back...”** GREGORY: “But all of these things taken together become at the very least a distraction. That word gets thrown around a lot here. But in a second term, as one adviser told me, any day you waste is a day you cannot get back when you've got a limited window to get done the business you want to get done in a second term.” (NBC’s [“Today,”](#) 5/15/13)

## **OBAMA’S 2013 SCANDALS ARE ALREADY CREATING 2014 DIVISIONS**

**“It's No Secret That Many Democratic Lawmakers Have Never Been Enamored Of President Obama.”** “It's no secret that many Democratic lawmakers have never been enamored of President Obama. He lacks schmooze, an element crucial to building relationships on Capitol Hill. It's something he's moved to remedy in the last few months, wining and dining senators in both parties ahead of critical votes on his second term agenda.” (“The Edge: For Obama, Relationships Would Help,” [National Journal](#), 5/15/13)

- **In The Wake Of Obama's “Scandal Trifecta,” Democrats Have Not Hesitated To Condemn The Administration.** “But this week's scandal trifecta has made it pretty clear the charm offensive was too little, too late. Democrats didn't hesitate to condemn the IRS's mishandled tea party probing and the Justice Department's secret search of Associated Press phone records, all on the heels of the House inquiries into Benghazi.” (“The Edge: For Obama, Relationships Would Help,” [National Journal](#), 5/15/13)

**Obama's Second-Term Scandals That Have “Forced The White House To Play Defense Have The Strong Possibility Of Hurting The President And His Party At The Polls In November 2014.”** “Even though he's done running for office, President Barack Obama has a lot at stake in next year's midterm elections. And a trio of scandals that have ignited over the past week that have forced the White House to play defense have the strong possibility of hurting the president and his party at the polls in November 2014.” (Paul Steinhauser, “Will Scandals 2013 Impact Elections 2013?” [CNN](#), 5/14/13)

- **“As A Trio Of Scandals Threatens To Engulf President Barack Obama, Congressional Democrats Facing Election Next Year Are Talking Tough About The Administration And Taking The First Steps To Detach Themselves From The President.”** (Jonathan Martin, James Hohmann and Alex Isenstadt, “Scandals Could Roil 2014 Elections,” [Politico](#), 5/15/13)

**“In A Worrying Sign” For Obama, Democrats Have Also “Criticized The President For Not Being More Aggressive In Responding To Trouble Within The Government.”** “But in a worrying sign for the White House, some Democrats also criticized the president for not being more aggressive in responding to trouble within the government. Robert Gibbs, Obama's former White House press secretary, said the president should have appointed a bipartisan commission of former IRS officials to look into the issue of targeting political organizations. And Gibbs gently chided his former boss for using passive language when he first addressed the political targeting during a White House news conference Monday.” (Julie Pace, “Obama Tries To Regain Control Amid Controversies,” [The Associated Press](#), 5/15/13)

**Democrats Are Raising “The Volume On Their Displeasure With The Scandals.”** “The convergence of a renewed focus on the attacks on the U.S. facility in Benghazi, Libya, revelations about the IRS targeting conservative groups and the Department of Justice seizing phone records from Associated Press reporters is prompting Democratic calls for accountability and raising fears that their candidates next year could become collateral damage should voters grow unhappy with Obama. Add in concerns about the implementation of the Affordable Care Act and you've got a party dreading another 2010-style backlash toward perceived Washington excess. Democrats on Tuesday raised the volume on their displeasure with the scandals, suggesting they were ready to create some distance from Obama.” (Jonathan Martin, James Hohmann and Alex Isenstadt, “Scandals Could Roil 2014 Elections,” [Politico](#), 5/15/13)

- **Sen. Kay Hagan (D-NC), On Both The IRS & DOJ Scandals: “It's Very, Very Troubling.”** “First of all, when you look at this, it's like when it rains it pours,” said Sen. Kay Hagan (D-N.C.), who's up for reelection next year, about the IRS and Department of Justice stories. “It's very, very troubling.” (Jonathan Martin, James Hohmann and Alex Isenstadt, “Scandals Could Roil 2014 Elections,” [Politico](#), 5/15/13)
- **Rep. Bruce Braley (D-IA): “Any Time You Have A Series Of Concerns Raised Like We've Been**

**Seeing This Week, That's A Bad Week...** "1st District Rep. Bruce Braley was asked in a Wednesday conference call with Iowa reporters if the recent events hurt Democrats. 'I think any time you have a series of concerns raised like we've been seeing this week, that's a bad week for whatever party is in the White House that is in charge of the executive branch,' Braley said. Braley called for the resignation of Lois Lerner, director of exempt organizations at the IRS." (Jon Erickson, "Iowa's Congressional Delegation United To Learn What's Wrong In Washington," [The Gazette](#), 5/15/13)

- **Sen. Mark Begich (D-AK), On The IRS Scandal: "Obviously And Clearly [There Was] A Lack Of Oversight Of What Was Going On Over There."** "But the actions by the IRS and Department of Justice are a different story, offering the appearance of unambiguous government overreach. 'That's a problem,' said Sen. Mark Begich (D-Alaska), who's facing a potentially tough reelection next year, about the IRS story. 'I don't care if it was President Obama, President Bush or President whoever — obviously and clearly [there was] a lack of oversight of what was going on over there.'" (Jonathan Martin, James Hohmann and Alex Isenstadt, "Scandals Could Roil 2014 Elections," [Politico](#), 5/15/13)
- **"As For The Tracking Of The AP's Phone Calls, Begich Said Of Obama: 'He Shouldn't Tolerate It. He Should Have Zero Tolerance On This Issue.'"** (Jonathan Martin, James Hohmann and Alex Isenstadt, "Scandals Could Roil 2014 Elections," [Politico](#), 5/15/13)

**NBC's Lisa Myers: "I Think The Democrats Now Are Starting To Worry" About Benghazi.** MYERS: "There is something called Benghazi going on. And I think the Democrats now are starting to worry about it. I started--I got calls from a number of Democrats yesterday trying to undermine Greg Hicks's testimony, saying he wasn't demoted, etc. So I think they feel that some damage was done by those three witnesses on Wednesday." (MSNBC's [Morning Joe](#), 5/10/13)

**"What Troubles Democratic Operatives Is The Possibility That No Amount Of Fancy Footwork Around The President Saves Candidates Running In States Where Obama Is A Drag."** "What troubles Democratic operatives is the possibility that no amount of fancy footwork around the president saves candidates running in states where Obama is a drag. The concern is that 2014 becomes a replay of the previous midterms: whether you supported the administration agenda or opposed key bills was ultimately irrelevant when the political tsunami struck." (Jonathan Martin, James Hohmann and Alex Isenstadt, "Scandals Could Roil 2014 Elections," [Politico](#), 5/15/13)