



# Thelma, Louise, & Geithner

*Geithner Takes The Wheel From Thelma And Louise In Flirting With Going Off The Fiscal Cliff*



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**Today, Secretary Of The Treasury Tim Geithner Couldn't Promise That Obama And The Democrats Wouldn't Send The Nation Off The Fiscal Cliff.** FOX's CHRIS WALLACE: "Last question, can you promise that we will not go over the cliff?" TREASURY SECRETARY TIMOTHY GEITHNER: "No, I can't promise that. That's a decision that lies in the hands of the Republicans that are now opposing increases in tax rates. If they recognize the reality that we can't afford to extend those tax rates, then we have the basis for an agreement that will be very good for the American people." WALLACE: "And the president bears no responsibility? It's all up to the Republicans?" GEITHNER: "Chris, ask yourself this question: why does it make sense for the country to force tax increases on all Americans because a small group of Republicans want to extend tax rates for two percent of Americans? Why does that make any sense? There's no reason why that should happen. We can't afford those tax rates. That's like the deep tragic lesson of the last decade. We can't afford them, so we're not going to get through it – we're not going to the end now without a recognition from Republicans of that basic reality. And that's going to be the responsible thing to do. And my judgment is they are going to do it because there's no alternative to that." (Fox's "[Fox News Sunday](#)," 12/2/12)

**GEITHNER JOINS A GROWING CHORUS OF DEMOCRATS VOICING SUPPORT FOR GOING OFF THE FISCAL CLIFF**

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**“Call Them The Cliff Jumpers. A Growing Bloc Of Emboldened Liberals Say They’re Not Afraid To Watch Defense Spending Get Gouged And Taxes Go Up On Every American If A Budget Deal Doesn’t Satisfy Their Priorities.”** (Seung Min Kim, “Fiscal Cliff: Will They Jump?,” [Politico](#), 11/25/12)

***The Washington Post* Headline: “Democrats Threaten To Go Over ‘Fiscal Cliff’ If GOP Fails To Raise Taxes.”** (Lori Montgomery, “Democrats Threaten To Go Over ‘Fiscal Cliff’ If GOP Fails To Raise Taxes,” [The Washington Post](#), 7/15/12)

***The Washington Post’s* Greg Sargent Reports That White House Meetings About The Fiscal Cliff Have Conveyed A Willingness “To Go Over The Fiscal Cliff If Necessary.”** “I’m told that representatives of major unions and progressive groups met privately this morning with senior Obama administration officials at the White House — and were pleased with what they heard. Things can always change at a moment’s notice. But attendees at this meeting came away convinced — for now — that the White House firmly believes it has the leverage in the fiscal cliff talks, and has no intention of budging on the demand for higher tax rates from the rich or on other core priorities. Indeed, one person at the meeting — which included people from the AFLCIO, AFSCME, SEIU, MoveOn and others — came away convinced that the White House would ultimately prove willing to go over the fiscal cliff if necessary, rather than give ground on core demands, though this is not by any means a desired option and isn’t being discussed as a strategic possibility.” (Greg Sargent, “Reasons To Be Encouraged About Fiscal Cliff’s Endgame,” [The Washington Post’s The Plum Line](#), 11/23/12)

**“A Democratic Source Close To The Negotiations Said That The White House ‘Definitely’ Sees Running Out The Clock As To Its Advantage...”** “Some Democrats have said the party’s leverage could be greater after the nation goes over the cliff, because pressure would grow on both parties to reduce taxes for the middle class. A Democratic source close to the negotiations said that the White House ‘definitely’ sees running out the clock as to its advantage, since it believes it has more public support for its position of extending middle-class tax rates but increasing them on the wealthy.” (Amie Parnes, Erik Wasson, and Russell Berman, “Obama Tries To Corner GOP Over Tax Rates,” [The Hill](#), 11/26/12)

**Empowered Democrats That Are Resistant To Significant Changes To Entitlements Are Making It More Difficult For The Party To Strike A Deal To Solve The Nation’s Fiscal Problems.** “President Obama’s re-election and Democratic gains in Congress were supposed to make it easier for the party to strike a deal with Republicans to resolve the year-end fiscal crisis by providing new leverage. But they could also make it harder as empowered Democrats, including some elected on liberal platforms, resist significant changes in entitlement programs like Social Security and Medicare.” (Robert Pear, “Efforts To Curb Social Spending Face Resistance,” [The New York Times](#), 11/26/12)