

Republican Sequestration: An Irrational Road Ahead

As the March 1st deadline quickly approaches, there is still time to stop the automatic spending cuts, known as sequestration, from occurring. Unfortunately, many Republicans have indicated that they are willing to let sequestration happen in spite of the harmful impact it will have on the economy, our national defense, and on working Americans:

Rep. Lynn Westmoreland : “I think the sequester happens. I don’t think anyone wants to see it, but we got to get real about cutting spending. If this is the only way we can cut spending, this is what we gotta do.” [[POLLITICO, 2/6](#)]

Rep. John Shimkus: “He can announce all he wants. Sequestration is coming. It's coming. We've got to get spending cuts. ... No new revenue. It's all about spending.” [[POLITICO, 2/5](#)]

Sen. Tom Coburn: “I think sequester’s going to happen. ... I think people want it to happen.” [[New York Times, 2/1](#)]

Sen. Mike Johanns: “I just have a feeling the sequester’s going to happen. ...I just think there’s so much concern about the debt and spending that it overrides most issues these days.” [[CQ, 2/1](#)]

Sen. Kelly Ayotte: “[Sequestration] looks like . . . where we’re headed.” [[CQ, 2/1](#)]

Sen. John Cornyn: “[The sequester] is the only cuts we’ve got right now.” [[Washington Post, 1/30](#)]

House Budget Committee Chairman Paul Ryan: “I think the sequester is going to happen.” [[Meet the Press, 1/27](#)]

The facts are clear: according to budget experts, sequestration is a harmful policy that could disrupt our economic recovery and cost jobs:

Bipartisan Policy Center: “Our estimate of approximately one million lost jobs due to sequester remains our base case if a full sequester occurs as scheduled on March 1.” [[1/29/13](#)]

Congressional Budget Office: “if all of that fiscal tightening occurs, real (inflation-adjusted) gross domestic product (GDP) will drop by 0.5 percent in 2013 ... That contraction of the economy will cause employment to decline and the unemployment rate to rise to 9.1 percent in the fourth quarter of 2013” [[11/8/12](#)]

In addition to harming our economy, sequestration would have a hard-hitting impact on America's defense. Our military leaders have continued to urge Congress to act on a balanced replacement that responsibly addresses our fiscal challenges. Just last weekend, several leaders highlighted the impact sequestration would have on military readiness and urged Republicans for an alternative:

Defense Secretary Leon Panetta: "If Congress stands back and allows the sequester to happen, it would be a shameful, irresponsible act. ... If sequester goes into effect, and we have to do the kind of cuts that go right at readiness, right at maintenance, right at training, we are going to weaken the United States and make it more difficult to respond to crises." [[NBC's "Meet the Press," 2/3/13](#)]

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Martin Dempsey: "There's this notion that [sequestration will] probably okay, because they're just a bunch of white-collar bureaucrats. The 86 percent that will be affected that live outside of Washington, D.C. are in our schools, in our clinics, in our motor pools, in our depots, in our factories. ... This will affect the entire country, and it will undermine our readiness for the next several years." [[NBC's "Meet the Press," 2/3/13](#)]

Democrats are at the negotiating table and have [produced a balanced bill](#) that averts sequestration and returns our country to a fiscally responsible path. The Republicans' response? Take your solutions elsewhere.