

Republicans Shirk From Responsibility of Sequestration Cuts They Have Been Proud to Claim

Recently, House Republicans have spent time playing the blame game and attempting to distance themselves from the devastating effects of the upcoming sequestration, designed to force Congress to enact a long-term plan to restore our nation's fiscal health. But a look at the not-so-distant past shows that sequestration was approved with 174 Republican votes and House Republican leaders were praising the process just a year ago, even claiming credit for the majority of the deal:

Speaker John Boehner:

THEN: *"When you look at this final agreement that we came to with the White House, I got 98 percent of what I wanted. I'm pretty happy."* [CBS Evening News, [8/1/11](#)]

NOW: *"The sequester is happening because the president didn't lead. He wanted an increase in the debt ceiling, without spending cuts and reforms that are truly needed to reduce our deficit and our debt. He wanted an increase in the debt ceiling so that he wouldn't have to deal with it twice before his election. So rather than agree to tax and entitlement reforms that everyone knows are needed, **the president and Senate Democrats gave us the sequester**, promising that the cuts would never actually happen."* [Weekly Press Conference, [7/19/12](#)]



Budget Committee Chairman Paul Ryan:

THEN: *"What conservatives like me have been fighting for, for years, are statutory caps on spending, legal caps in law that says government agencies cannot spend over a set amount of money. And if they breach that amount across the board, sequester comes in to cut that spending, and you can't turn that off without a super-majority vote. We got that in law... I wanted 100% of what I wanted, but I got 66%. That's better than nothing. We got good spending cuts. Not as much as I want, but I'm going to take these spending cuts and I'm going to fight for some more tomorrow."* [Fox News Interview with Sean Hannity, [8/1/11](#)]

NOW: *"The president and his party leaders that insisted on this makeup, this formula. Defense spending is not half of all federal spending, but it's half of the cuts approximately in the sequester. We disagreed with that then, and we disagree with it now."* [MSNBC, [8/23/12](#)]



Republican Bills Promote Sequestration

Throughout the 112th Congress, House Republicans have offered several pieces of legislation that use sequestration as their preferred method to balance the budget. As their solution to the 2011 debt ceiling crisis, Republicans included sequestration in their alternative plan, and several bills are listed on the Republican Study Committee website that use the same process as sequestration to reduce the deficit:

Cut, Cap, and Balance Act, [H.R. 2560](#) (Rep. Chaffetz)

Their bill, which passed the House with 229 Republican votes, relied on “cuts” in discretionary and mandatory spending **enforced through sequestration**, and a “cap” on total outlays from 2013-2021 **enforced through sequestration**.

Returning to Responsible Fiscal Policies Act, [H.R. 2041](#) (Rep. Kingston)

“Enforcement: If Congress is unwilling or unable to bring spending within the limit, spending would automatically be cut across-the-board to meet the prescribed spending level for that year. Spending would be divided into three categories: direct (entitlements), non-security discretionary and security-related discretionary. Cuts would be applied proportionally in each of these categories based on their level of growth from the previous year.” [[Republican Study Committee](#)]

One Percent Spending Reduction Act, [H.R. 1848](#) (Rep. Mack)

“Enforcement: 1) Congress and the President work together to enact program reforms and cut federal spending by one percent each year; or 2) If Congress and the President fail to do so, **the bill triggers automatic, across-the-board spending cuts to ensure the one percent reduction is realized.**” [[Republican Study Committee](#)]

Republicans are walking away from the American people once again and trying to falsely pin blame on President Obama and Democrats for the sequester they called for. Instead of sharing responsibility and working together on replacing the cuts with a big, bold, balanced plan, House Republicans are wasting time on a message bill that kicks the can down the road. By refusing to work with Democrats on a bipartisan agreement, Republicans are making it clear that they are not serious about addressing the deficit.