

As Warnings Continue to Mount, Republicans Continue to Reject Compromise and Show Support for the Irrational Sequester

Over the last few weeks, there has been no shortage of dire predictions about the harmful impact of the sequester if it goes into effect on Friday, March 1. These reckless and irrational cuts would put our economic recovery and national security at risk. But despite many warnings, Republicans have continued to speak in support of this harmful policy, choosing these irresponsible cuts over a compromise that balances spending cuts with new revenues:

- Rep. Mike Pompeo (KS-4): “The sequester is here, it’s time, we’ve got to get these spending reductions in place... It’s going to be a home run. We’re doing what the American people asked the United States House of Representatives to do in 2010 when I came here. We’re reducing the size and scope of the federal government. I think the American people will have tremendous respect. I think the markets will respond very positively when we, for the first time, say we have a spending reduction plan and we’re actually going to follow through on it. So I’m very optimistic that on March 2 we’ll all wake up and America will have tremendous respect for what its House of Representatives led and what its federal government was able to accomplish.” [[POLITICO, 2/13](#)]
- Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY): “It’s pretty clear to me that the sequester is going to go into effect ...Read my lips: I’m not interested in an 11th-hour negotiation.” [[Washington Post, 2/12](#)]
- Rep. Cynthia Lummis (R-WY): “Sequestration will take place...I am excited. It will be the first time since I’ve been in Congress that we really have significant cuts.” [[Billings Gazette, 2/11](#)]
- Rep. Paul Broun (GA-10): “I want to see [sequestration] go into place.” [[Cherokee Tribune, 2/9](#)]
- Rep. Steve Scalise (LA-1): “The consensus is we want the sequester numbers to come in and to finally see spending reduced in Washington.” [[Dow Jones Business News, 2/8](#)]
- Rep. Mick Mulvaney (SC-5): “We want to keep the sequester in place and take the cuts we can get.” [[Dow Jones Business News, 2/8](#)]
- Rep. Tom Cole (OK-4): “We would rather see those cuts happen ... I can assure you that there will not be a political blink on this. These cuts will occur.” [[U.S. News and World Report, 2/6](#)].
- Rep. Lynn Westmoreland (GA-3): “I think the sequester happens.... If this is the only way we can cut spending, this is what we gotta do.” [[POLITICO, 2/6](#)]
- Rep. John Shimkus (IL-15): “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 (R-OK): “I think sequester’s going to happen. ... I think people want it to happen.” [[New York Times, 2/1](#)]
- Sen. Mike Johanns (R-NE): “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](#)]

- Rep. Scott DesJarlais (TN-4): “Sequestration needs to happen...Bottom line, it needs to happen and that’s the deal we struck to raise the debt limit.” [[Cleveland Daily Banner, 2/1](#)]
- Sen. John Cornyn (R-TX): “[The sequester] is the only cuts we’ve got right now.” [[Washington Post, 1/30](#)]
- House Budget Committee Chairman Paul Ryan (WI-1): “I think the sequester is going to happen.” [[NBC’s “Meet the Press,” 1/27](#)]

With sequestration expected to hurt the middle class, our economy, and jobs, and place our national security at risk, our national leaders have warned against letting these irrational cuts happen:

- Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Army Gen. Martin E. Dempsey: “This will affect the entire country and it will undermine our readiness for the next several years.” [[NBC’s “Meet the Press,” 2/3](#)]
- Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta: “Frankly one of the greatest security risks we are now facing as a nation, that this budget uncertainty could prompt the most significant military-readiness crisis in more than a decade.” [Senate Armed Services Committee, 2/7]
- Secretary of Homeland Security Janet Napolitano: “Put simply, the automatic budget reduction mandated by sequestration would be destructive to our nation’s security and to our economy. It would negatively affect the mission-readiness and capabilities of the men and women on the front lines. It would undermine the significant progress DHS has made over the last 10 years to build the nation’s preparedness and resiliency.” [House Homeland Security Committee, 2/14]
- Vice Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Mark Ferguson: “Simply stated, the combined effect of a year-long continuing resolution and sequestration will reduce our Navy’s overseas presence and adversely impact the material readiness and proficiency of our force, thus limiting the president’s options in time of crisis.” [Senate Armed Services Committee, 2/12]
- Secretary of Education Arne Duncan: “...A lot more children will not get the kinds of services and opportunities they need and as many as 40,000 teachers could lose their jobs.” [[CBS’s “Face the Nation”, 2/24](#)]
- Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood: “I am a Republican. My audience is trying to persuade my former colleagues that they need to come to the table with a proposal, which frankly they haven’t done. While the president has, the Republicans haven’t.” [[CNN’s “State of the Union,” 2/24](#)]
- Senator John McCain: “And if we don’t believe our military leaders, then who in the world do we believe? And I think that what we are doing now to the men and women who are serving is unconscionable, because they deserve a predictable life in the military, and also, these federal employees who don’t know whether they’re going to be laid off or not..” [[CNN’s “State of the Union,” 2/24](#)]

A broad range of critical programs would be impacted by the irrational sequester:

From the [White House](#):

- 70,000 young children could be kicked off Head Start, 10,000 teacher jobs could be put at risk, and funding for up to 7,200 special education teachers, aides, and staff could be cut.
- Up to 373,000 seriously mentally ill adults and seriously emotionally disturbed children could go untreated.

- The FBI and other law enforcement entities could see a reduction in capacity equivalent to more than 1,000 Federal agents.
- Small Business Administration (SBA) loan guarantees could be cut by up to \$902 million, constraining financing needed by small businesses to maintain and expand their operations and create jobs.
- The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) could conduct 2,100 fewer inspections at domestic and foreign facilities that manufacture food products.
- Federally-assisted programs like Meals on Wheels could serve 4 million fewer meals to seniors.
- People receiving Emergency Unemployment Compensation benefits could see their benefits cut by nearly 11 percent. Affected long-term unemployed individuals could lose an average of more than \$450 in benefits that they and their families count on while they search for another job.

From the [House Committee on Appropriations - Democrats](#):

- 10 percent of FAA's workforce of 40,000 could be furloughed on any given day resulting in reduced air traffic control, longer delays, and economic losses for air transportation, tourism and the economy as a whole.
- More than \$1.6 billion could be cut from medical research, meaning fewer and smaller research projects aimed at finding treatments and cures for diseases like cancer, diabetes and Alzheimer's.
- More than \$1 billion in cuts could reduce aid needed by families, businesses, and communities to recover and rebuild after hurricanes, tornadoes, snowstorms, floods, and other natural disasters.

From [Macroeconomic Advisers, LLC](#):

- By the end of 2014, the sequestration could cost approximately 700,000 jobs. Higher unemployment could linger for several years.

While Republicans decide whether or not they will give up messaging and come to the negotiating table to avert the disastrous sequester Democrats have an [alternative](#) that the House GOP has refused to even consider. After all the warnings and facts, it's puzzling why Republicans won't consider an alternative or work with Democrats on a balanced solution. There's only a few days left to place our nation's well being over partisan ideology.