



The New York Times Reluctantly Credits Conservatives in ObamaCare Battle

[In an article for Tuesday's edition of the New York Times](#), authors Jonathan Weisman and Ashley Parker were hard-pressed to say nice things about the hard-core conservatives who have forced House Speaker John Boehner's hand in confronting the president over his signature legislation, ObamaCare. But they did manage to shine the light of appreciation onto those few who are standing their ground.



The *Times*, of course, stated that the purpose behind the efforts of these stalwart few was to shut down the government, a misreading of reality common from the *Times*. But forgiving them that, and recognizing instead that what the conservative cadre wants to do is to de-fund the healthcare monstrosity and that they are willing to go to the mat not only with the president but with the House Republican leadership as well to accomplish it, the *Times'* article is well-balanced.

It is clear that, no matter where the authors look, the ones responsible for holding Boehner's feet to the fire know exactly what they are doing, and why. It's a political maneuver based on constitutional principles. For instance, Rep. Steve King (R-Iowa) was quoted:

We've passed the witching hour of midnight, and the sky didn't fall, nothing caved in. Now the pressure will build on both sides [of the issue], and the American people will weigh in.

King is a member of the Tea Party Caucus, which was formed in the summer of 2010 and now enjoys support from 46 House members in its quest to force the House to promote fiscal responsibility and limit the government to its constitutional prerogatives. As the *Times'* authors noted, King is one of a "hard-core group of about two dozen" whose strategy is "to yield no ground until they are able to pass legislation reining in the health care law ... and if the federal government stays closed, so be it."

As King strengthened his commitment to conservative principles, he found himself voting less and less in line with the Republican establishment. During the 110th Congress (2007-2008) he voted with the Republican leadership more than 90 percent of the time. But during the 112th Congress (2011-2012), his support for the party line began to wilt and more and more frequently King voted against his party's leadership. In his most recent reelection campaign, King found himself targeted by the wife of Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack with lots of out of state money. He won anyway, and said afterwards:

I faced \$7 million, the best of everything Democrats can throw at me, their dream candidate and everything that can come from the Obama machine, and [I] prevailed through all of that with 55 percent of my district that was new.

Rep. Raul Labrador (R-Idaho) has a rating of 87 out of 100 in *The New American's* [Freedom Index](#), and despite being a freshman, is politically savvy and thinks the people in his district are expecting nothing less from him than a hard line:

It's getting better for us. The moment when Republicans are least popular is right when the



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on October 2, 2013

government shuts down.

But when the president continues to say [that] he's unwilling to negotiate with the American people, when [Senate Majority Leader] Harry Reid says he won't even take things to conference, I don't think the American people are going to take that too kindly.

Rep. Jeff Duncan (R-S.C.), with a Freedom Index (FI) score of 86, ran for reelection in a redrawn district and still won the election with 67 percent of the vote. He knows his constituents:

I was elected in 2010. I feel Obamacare is shutting down America. [I] feel strongly enough [to hold the line].

Others among the conservative cadre successfully thwarting House Speaker John Boehner's efforts to compromise are Reps. Justin Amash (R-Mich., and a FI score of 93), Paul Broun (R-Ga., and a FI score of 90) and Thomas Massie (R-Ky., and a FI score of 100). In just his short time in Congress, Rep. Amash has voted against Republican positions an astonishing 136 times, while Massie has gone against his party 91 times and Broun 84 times.

When Rep. Phil Gingrey (R-Ga.) voted against the continuing resolution offered by Boehner that would have allowed funding for ObamaCare, his spokeswoman Jen Talaber said:

The congressman made a pledge that he would not vote for a continuing resolution that funded Obamacare. That was the compelling factor in his vote last night.

Gingrey's commitment to honor his pledge was seconded by Rep. John Flemming (R-La.), who also remained resolute against compromise. Flemming wouldn't even consider repealing the medical device tax as a concession to continue to fund the government:

That could be bad because it could improve a bad bill. And while it's a terrible tax, removing [it] to make what is really an atrocious bill ... slightly better, I'm not sure that's a good idea.

That's a politician's way of saying: I'm not voting for this. Please don't ask me about it again.

There aren't many in what the *Times* calls this "staunch group of Republicans," but they are enough. Although their numbers are very small, their influence is vastly greater because of their principles. It's this type of statesmen who are so desperately needed at this time and place to begin the long trek back to fiscal and constitutional sanity.

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