



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on August 22, 2013

“Defund ObamaCare” Tours Begin, Putting Pressure on Reluctant Senators

On Monday, [the Heritage Foundation](#) and [two Tea Party grassroots organizations](#), Tea Party Patriots and For America, began “Defund ObamaCare” tours to put political pressure on senators who have not yet signed Senator Ted Cruz’s (R-Texas, shown) Defund Obamacare Act (Senate Bill 1292). The Heritage Foundation’s tour started in Fayetteville, Arkansas, and will visit nine cities by the end of August. The tour backed by Tea Party Patriots and For America will start in Ohio and continue through Kentucky, Texas, Mississippi, South Carolina, and Virginia.



Heritage is investing more than half a million dollars in an advertising campaign directed to skeptical or neutral senators who haven’t signed Cruz’s bill, including Senators Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.), Mark Kirk (R-Ill.), Kelly Ayotte (R-N.H.), Tom Coburn (R-Okla.), and Richard Burr (R-N.C.). The ads feature a chicken which says that if the senators “fund it, you own it.”

At the kickoff meeting in Fayetteville, Heritage Foundation President Jim DeMint said it’s going to require some backbone to support the risky legislation which could backfire:

The real act of courage is if they get back in September and [they] pass a bill that funds all operations of the government except Obamacare.

If that message is received, then any government shutdown could be blamed on the White House as Congress could claim (there is a similar bill in the House which has already voted 40 times to repeal ObamaCare entirely) that they do want to fund the government, just not ObamaCare. Shutting down the government would then hinge on a decision by the president to sign the bill and let his signature piece of legislation die of asphyxiation, or shut down the government when it runs out of money on October 1.

On Tuesday, when the tour hit Dallas, Senator Cruz explained the strategy, and the risk:

Our friends in the media like to tell us this is not a fight we can win.

Let me tell you how we win this fight. The House of Representatives will pass a Continuing Resolution (CR) that funds everything, everything in its entirety, except Obamacare.

What happens next is President Obama and Harry Reid are going to scream and yell “those mean nasty Republicans are threatening to shut down the federal government!”

What has to happen after that is we’ve got to do something conservatives haven’t done in a long time. We’ve got stand up and win the argument.

We’ve got to go out and say “Look, we don’t want to shut the government down. We have voted to fund the government. We have already voted. Why is President Obama threatening to shut the government down to force Obamacare?”



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President Obama has already unilaterally and lawlessly granted waivers of the employer mandate in Obamacare to every giant corporation in America. Why is it that President Obama is threatening to shut down the federal government to deny those very same waivers to hard-working American families?

That is an argument we can win.

The Heritage Foundation, the developer of the strategy, explained in an "[Issue Brief](#)" precisely how passing such a CR would work. Hans A. von Spakovsky, a senior legal fellow at the foundation, wrote:

Supporters of Obamacare would be put in an unenviable position of trying to explain why they are willing to interrupt the normal functioning of the federal government in order to fund an unworkable law that Americans do not like and do not want to see implemented.

[The strategy] is to attach it to a must-pass continuing resolution before the federal government runs out of money on October 1....

The smartest thing the House of Representatives could do is pass a CR as soon as possible that funds the government with the exception of Obamacare. That would force the President and his supporters to explain why they would shut down the government to fund an unfair, unaffordable and highly unpopular law that is so unworkable that the Administration has itself admitted it cannot manage.

Von Spakovsky said that this would work better than attempting to repeal ObamaCare in its entirety:

Americans will be better off if *any* parts of Obamacare are stopped from going into effect. And the more parts of the law that are delayed ... the more likely it is that this horrendously complicated law ... will fall apart like a house of cards.

It's a risky proposition, but one that many are supporting as the official ObamaCare sign-up date approaches. If the message comes across — that the American people don't like ObamaCare, don't want ObamaCare, and don't want to pay for ObamaCare — then this strategy has a chance.

Underlying such a strategy, however, is a much larger and more important message: Is America still a democratic republic, or is it instead a nation of serfs to whom the ruling class issues its proclamations, no matter how unpopular, and forces those serfs not only to suffer under the proclamations but to pay for them as well?

When pressed on that point, Scott Hogenson, the campaign manager of For America's effort, [responded](#):

Think for a second. You're a taxpayer, an ordinary American working woman. You've got to pay for a health-care system that big business, political cronies, congressmen and their staffs do not have to participate in.

That doesn't sound like a democratic republic to me. That's what's got the grassroots upset. We are not serfs. We are citizens.

Photo of Senator Ted Cruz: AP Images

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