



## White House threatens veto of Senate GOP sequester bill

By Erik Wasson - 02/28/13 01:51 PM ET

The White House on Thursday threatened to veto the Senate Republican sequester bill in the unlikely event it passes Congress.

“If the President were presented with S. 16, his senior advisors would recommend that he veto the bill,” the White House said.

The Senate GOP bill, sponsored by Sen. Pat Toomey (R-Pa.) and Sen. James Inhofe (R-Okla.), would give the administration added power to determine how to implement the \$85 billion in spending cuts, known as the sequester, set to take effect Friday.

“The Administration strongly opposes S. 16, which would protect tax loopholes for the wealthy and congressional pork barrel projects and would lock in severe cuts that threaten hundreds of thousands of middle class jobs and slash vital services for children, seniors, and our troops and military families,” a White House statement reads.

“While no amount of flexibility can avoid the fact that middle class families will bear the brunt of the cuts required by this bill, nothing is asked of the wealthiest Americans,” it adds.

The White House said the bill is nothing more than an attempt to shift focus away from Congress, urging lawmakers to pass a sequester replacement that includes tax increases.

In a separate statement, the White House said it supports a Senate Democratic bill that would impose a new minimum tax on millionaires, close energy and corporate relocation tax breaks and cut farm subsidies in order to replace the sequester.

The White House support comes even though the Senate bill actually adds to the budget deficit.

The Congressional Budget Office estimates that the Democrats' bill would increase budget deficits by \$7.2 billion over 10 years, largely because it contains new farm subsidy spending included to mollify rural Democrats angry over the \$30 billion cut in direct farm payments in the bill.

The Toomey-Inhofe bill is opposed by appropriators in both Houses of Congress and has been targeted by Republican defense hawks. They worry that President Obama would abuse the new flexibility to go after projects they favor.

Source:

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