

## White House postpones Obamacare's employer mandate until after midterm elections

Posted By [Alexis Levinson](#) On 9:31 PM 07/02/2013 In | [No Comments](#)

Businesses won't be fined for not providing health insurance to their employees for one more year, the Obama administration said Tuesday evening, announcing that they would delay the implementation of that mandate in the Affordable Care Act until 2015 — after the midterm elections.

A [blog post](#) by White House senior adviser Valerie Jarrett on the White House blog explained that the goal of the postponement is to help “[cut] the red tape” in the “reporting process” for employers, and to give employers “more time to comply.” The changes come as a response to concerns expressed in “ongoing discussions with businesses” that “you need the time to get this right,” Jarrett wrote.

“It will allow us to consider ways to simplify the new reporting requirements consistent with the law,” [wrote Mark Mazur](#), assistant secretary for Tax Policy at the U.S. Department of the Treasury, in announcing the decision. “Second, it will provide time to adapt health coverage and reporting systems while employers are moving toward making health coverage affordable and accessible for their employees.”

Mazur promised “guidance” on the new timeline later this week.

By postponing the implementation of the mandate until 2015, the White House potentially spares Democratic candidates in 2014 — including several vulnerable Democratic senators seeking re-election in red states — from attacks surrounding the implementation of the law during the midterm elections. Republicans have already made clear that they will attack Democrats relentlessly on Obamacare and its implementation.

“This announcement means even the Obama administration knows the ‘train wreck’ will only get worse,” Speaker of the House John Boehner said in a statement Tuesday evening, quoting Democratic Sen. Max Baucus, one of the architects of the law, who expressed concern about a “train wreck coming down” if more work was not done to educate the public on implementation of the law.

“I hope the administration recognizes the need to release American families from the mandates of this law as well,” Boehner said. “This is a clear acknowledgment that the law is unworkable, and it underscores the need to repeal the law and replace it with effective, patient-centered reforms.”

A spokeswoman for the House Ways and Means Committee, which has jurisdiction over health care, called the decision “deeply disturbing.”

“The Obama administration’s decision to give corporate America a free pass on the employer mandate while continuing to force average, everyday Americans to abide by the law is deeply disturbing,” said spokeswoman Sarah Swinehart. “Instead, the administration should spend its time focusing on what impacts individuals and families struggling to afford government-mandated insurance. The administration’s decision is an admission that this law is a failure and that we still need to lower the cost of health care for all Americans — which this job-killing law fails to do.”

Democrats, by contrast, said the change in implementation meant the administration was paying attention to the concerns of business owners.

“Flexibility is a good thing,” said Adam Jentleson, a spokesman for Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid. “Both the administration and Senate Democrats have shown — and continue to show — a willingness to be flexible and work with all interested parties to make sure that implementation of the Affordable Care Act is as beneficial as possible to all involved. It is better to do this right than fast.”

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