

Written by Jeremy Funk
Tuesday, 30 July 2013 10:47

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Burr (R-NC): *“The dumbest idea I’ve ever heard of”*

Coburn (R-OK): *“intellectually dishonest”* □

McCain (R-AZ): *“shenanigans”*

Shelby (R-AL): *“it's foolish”*

Washington DC – When Senator Chuck Grassley [sent a letter](#) to Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid last week warning that he would block a continuing resolution that would keep the federal government open after September 30 unless Obamacare was defunded, he probably didn't expect a barrage of friendly fire in response from fellow Republicans who have called his threats everything from “terror politics” to “intellectually dishonest” to [“really dumb.”](#)

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Jeremy Funk, Comm. Dir., Americans United for Change: “We get it. Senator Grassley really, *really* wants to make it legal again for insurance companies to deny care to kids born with a ‘pre-existing condition’, drop people when they get seriously sick, and charge women more than men for premiums -- so much so that he is willing to shut down the government and [disrupt services](#) for millions unless he gets his way. But Grassley’s latest attempt to strip away Obamacare’s new consumer protections that are already [working to lower premiums](#) is so beyond the pale and counterproductive that even many of his Republican colleagues are condemning it.”

A Growing Chorus of Republicans Urging Grassley to Release the Political Hostage, Don't Shut Down the Government:

- **U.S. Sen. Tom Coburn (R-OK):** “It’s a terribly dangerous and not successful strategy. You’re going to set an expectation among the conservatives in our party that we can achieve something that we’re not able to achieve. It’s not an achievable strategy. It’s creating the false impression that you can do something when you can’t.

It’s a denial of reality mixed with a whole bunch of hype

to promote groups and individuals who are saying, ‘I’m going to give you hope’ for something that we can’t do,” Coburn said. “The underlying premise is

intellectually dishonest

. . . . Creating false expectations and being less than honest about how you’re going to do this is the worst of politics.” [

[Washington Examiner](#)

, 7/29]

- **U.S. Sen. Richard Burr (R-NC):** “No, I think it’s the **dumbest idea I’ve ever heard of** ... Listen, so long as Barack Obama’s president, the Affordable Care is gonna be law... I think some of these guys need to understand that, you shut down the government, you better have a specific reason to do it that’s achievable. Defunding the Affordable Care Act is not achievable by shutting down the federal government. At some point, you’re gonna

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open the federal government back up, and Barack Obama's gonna be president, and he won't have signed the dissolution of the Affordable Care Act." [[Think Progress](#), 7/29]

- **U.S. Rep. Tom Cole (R-OK), Deputy Majority Whip:** Condemned the idea as "the political equivalent of throwing a temper tantrum" and accused Senate Republicans of "blackmail." Cole: "Shutting down the government is a suicidal political tactic. Eventually it will be reopened, but the president will not have capitulated and you will have discredited yourself and along the way you will have hurt the American people," Cole (R-Okla.) said Monday on MSNBC's "Now with Alex Wagner." // "The only way Republicans will lose the House is to shut down the government or default on the debt," the Oklahoma Republican told [Politico](#). "Shutting down the government is not in the best interests of the American people and it makes you look politically irresponsible." "I'm not inclined to jeopardize the crown jewel, and the House of Representatives is the crown jewel in this election cycle." [[Newsmax](#), July 26; [Twitter](#), 7/24; [Politico](#), July 29]

- **John McCain (R-AZ):** Obamacare repeal is "not going to happen" and that the American people would not stand for political "shenanigans" that tie a government shutdown or a hike in the debt ceiling to the health law. [[Washington Post](#), 7/22]

- **U.S. Rep. Peter King (R-NY):** "There's no reason to be threatening to bring down the government, let's make this work get spending cuts we need but the American people get turned off with the threat of terror politics." [[Political Wire](#), July 28]

- **U.S. Sen. Richard Shelby (R-AL):** "it's foolish" not to fund the government. [[Huffington Post](#), 7/26]

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Americans United for Change is a 501c4 issue-advocacy organization established in 2005 to beat back President Bush's effort to privatize Social Security and has been working ever since to advance a progressive agenda in Congress including health care

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reform, reversing climate change, Wall Street reform, protecting Medicare/Medicaid/Social Security from benefit cuts, minimizing gun violence, and requiring millionaires and big corporations to pay their fair share in taxes.