

**Republican Perspective**  
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**by Ed Manning**

**COMPROMISING REPUBLICANS**

*“We've been sitting at the compromise table for a long time. We're just waiting for that cold chair to be warmed up by the Republican leadership.” Debbie Wasserman Schultz*

Progressives often charge that Congressional Republicans are held hostage to their political “base” and show no willingness to compromise. Really? Look no further than the recent \$1.1 trillion omnibus spending bill passed by both Republican majority chambers. This massive 2009 page bill and the 233 page tax subsidy bill was largely the work of former House Speaker John Boehner’s “clean slate” exit plan. Republican voters are now being asked to give the new Speaker, Paul Ryan a pass on this legislation.

Let’s examine the compromise by Republicans in the 2016 omnibus spending bill:

1. Early on, they surrendered the Legislative branch’s constitutional duty of the power of the purse. All of President Obama’s major issues got funded because of fear of a government shutdown. Per the Washington Post, the government has shutdown 17 times since 1976. Believe it or not, some were championed by Democrats! However, the Republican House leadership blocked all riders limiting Democratic funding of amnesty, refugees, sanctuary cities and Planned Parenthood. It appears that Republicans lack confidence in their communication skills to show the American public that only the President has the authority to shutdown the federal government.
2. While numerous polls show that homeland security is a major concern to Americans, the Republicans fully funded Obama’s refugee settlement plan to the tune of \$1.67 billion. This funding approval came despite serious concerns raised in Congressional testimony by both our FBI Chief and other security experts about the U.S.’s ability to vet Syrian migrants.
3. Republicans agreed to quadruple the number of H-2b visas. These visas are largely granted to low-skilled third world immigrants. At a time when many blue collar workers are still reeling from the Great Recession, the U.S. imports individuals to compete for jobs in construction, trucking, etc.
4. Mitch McConnell’s home state of Kentucky has more than a few unemployed coal miners. McConnell promised a budget fight against Obama’s administrative “war on coal.” Democrats must love the way McConnell fights as their minority report on the omnibus stated: “Democrats were able to successfully block all new anti-environmental provisions.” Republicans dropped riders that would have prohibited funding for a) trade agreements establishing a limit on greenhouse gases and b) funding for certain climate-focused studies, reports, and plans.

5. During the 2014 mid-term elections, Republican candidates campaigned on “repeal and replace” Obamacare. Translation, kick the can down the road for another two years by suspending the tax on “Cadillac” health insurance plans and medical devices. The omnibus also suspends the health care tax until 2017 when Obama will be enjoying golf in Rancho Mirage, the surf in Honolulu and fried clams in Martha’s Vineyard.

What was the Democrat reaction to the Republican compromise? Senator Harry Reid offered: “Months ago, Democrats called on Republicans to work with us to craft a budget agreement. We wanted to get rid of sequestration, we were able to do that. We wanted to make sure there is parity between defense and the middle class, we wanted to make sure that we kept these poison pills off the legislation. All three goals we had, we accomplished,” he said. Reid said Democrats were able to “beat back GOP efforts to defund Planned Parenthood, and stop plans to tighten rules for accepting refugees. The legislation caps off a successful year for Senate Democrats,” Reid said.

Senate Minority Whip Dick Durbin, D-Ill., said the positive results for Democrats came after his party blocked passage of key defense bills that would have boosted defense spending, without any promise to boost domestic spending. Blocking those bills eventually forced Republicans to agree to Democrat demands.

Durbin also boasted that Democrats were able to push to renew the Export-Import Bank, after it was prevented from taking on any new business since the summer. The bank was renewed as part of a long-term highway bill.

The 2016 omnibus spending bill spotlights the Democratic version of compromise. Is there any wonder why the Republican base is fed-up?