

So Much for the President's Five-Day Promise

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During the election, then-candidate Barack Obama promised to put every bill that passed through Congress on the White House website for five days before he signed them. That would, he argued, give voters a chance to review the legislation and give him our opinions on the bills. He intimated that our input might even influence whether he signed the bills or not. That promise was, I'd say, the very foundation of the accountability and transparency plank in his platform.

It took him exactly nine days to break that promise, as he signed the "The Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act of 2009" only one day after it was presented to him for his signature. Now, he has decided to chuck that promise under the wheels of the Obama Express entirely. In fact, it was a promise he never tried to keep. As Stephen Dinan noted, the President has all the power and resources he needs to put the bills on the White House site and he's certainly under no obligation to sign them sooner than five days.

Jim Harper at the Cato Institute has compiled a chart of all the bills that have crossed the President's desk, how long it took for him to sign them, whether they were made available for our review and, if they were, if they were there for five days. He found that the President kept his promise only once out of 39 bills that came to him for signature. But he also found something else:

At this point, only one of 39 bills that the president has signed has been posted for five days in advance. (The DTV Delay Act was actually not held five days after formal presentment, but the White House posted it after the final version had passed Congress.) Twenty-four other bills have been held at the White House five days or more before the President has signed them. They just haven't been posted.

To repeat, over 60% of the legislation coming out of Congress waits five days for the president's signature as a matter of course. The only thing preventing implementation of the president's promise as to these bills is the White House's inexplicable reluctance to do what it says it will do.

I have to say, I'm mystified by this. There is no good reason these bills weren't posted for public review. For a White House described as the most web-savvy in history, putting these bills on the web should be a trivial task. A cynical soul might say that he never intended to keep his promise or that he's far more interested in using his tech staff to campaign for his legislation and re-election. Others could argue that he's being poorly served by his Chief of Staff who could have easily taken charge of this months ago. In either case, it's inexcusable.

President Obama promised accountability and transparency. So far, he's given us little but buck-passing and opacity. It's high time we held him accountable for his broken promise. All it takes is a few minutes at this site to ask the President why he broke a promise he considered so important during the campaign.

(via [Instapundit](#))

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