



Politifact Gives False Failing Grade to Connie Mack's Statements on Obama's Budget Plan

By [Dustin Siggins](#) - September 26, 2012

Over the last several months, [PolitiFact](#) has gone from being a respectable, if liberal, fact-checking website to the [laughingstock of fact-check organizations](#). Last week, *PolitiFact* set itself up for more ridicule as one of its state affiliates [went after](#) current Congressman and Florida Senate candidate [Connie Mack \(R-FL\)](#) for [stating](#), "Obama has no plan to reduce the deficit, let alone pay down the debt."

According to *PolitiFact's* flaw-filled analysis, Mack is mostly wrong:

Mack said that "President Obama has no plan to reduce the deficit, let alone pay down the debt."

Obama has presented a plan that reduces the deficit. Analysts have debated whether it goes far enough. But it is a plan.

However, while the plan reduces deficits, it doesn't eliminate them....

So Mack has a point that Obama's plan doesn't reduce the debt in dollars. He's wrong that Obama has no plan to reduce the deficit.

We rate this claim Mostly False.

There are several significant issues with *PolitiFact's* analysis. To wit:

First, while *PolitiFact's* multi-part ranking system is silly in and of itself, basic math shows its ranking should have been much more favorable to Mack. According to *PolitiFact*, half of Mack's claim is outright correct and half of his claim is – using *PolitiFact* Florida's logic – false. This means it should be at least a "half-true" claim.

Second, the analysis gives a great deal of credit to the President for presenting a [budget proposal](#) in February 2012 that eliminates about \$4 trillion in deficits over the span of ten years. However, as one budget expert told *PolitiFact*, much of the deficit reduction takes place because of economic recovery, not Obama's enactment of policies:

Chris Edwards of the libertarian Cato Institute, said Obama has “no plan” to pay down the debt if we’re referring to total accumulated debt over 10 years. And regarding the deficit, “the main ‘plan’ that shrinks the projected deficit over the next decade is that federal revenues are expected to rise as the economy is projected to recover in coming years,” he said.

On a related note, the President’s “plan” [includes expectations of lower spending](#) for Iraq and Afghanistan in the future – a bipartisan accounting gimmick, as these monies are not expected to be spent in the first place – and the first part of the Budget Control Act’s cuts, which became law over one year ago. These account for more than one-fourth of the “savings” the “plan” proposes, even though they are conditions that existed well before the release of Obama’s proposal.

Third, even if *PolitiFact* was willing to grant Obama full credit for the deficit reduction aspects of his proposal, it should have noted that his proposal was so politically unworkable it got zero votes in the House and the Senate *combined*. Additionally, it has economic projections [based upon wishful thinking](#). Clearly, even if it counts as a plan, the Obama proposal wasn’t a *serious* plan meant to actually *impact* the legislative debate.

Fourth, Mack was not being technical. He was writing [an op-ed](#) for *The Hill*, not an academic essay. To say the President’s ridiculous proposal isn’t a plan to reduce the deficit is 100 percent correct in the context and medium Mack used.

All in all, *PolitiFact* Florida used this analysis to continue its national partner’s tradition of carrying water for the Administration, the facts notwithstanding