

Republican Lawmakers Have History Of Criticizing The Congressional Budget Office When It Doesn't Fit Their Narrative

Republican Lawmakers Have Often Discredited And Undermined The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) When Inconvenienced By Its Assessments, Claiming The Office Is "Consistently Inconsistent" And That Its Scores Are "Hardly The Final Word On The Issue."

Republican Lawmakers Have Often Discredited The CBO's Work When Inconvenienced By Its Assessments, Claiming The CBO Is "Consistently Inconsistent" And Bases Estimates Off Of "Dubious Assumptions."

In March 2017, Amid A Fight Around Affordable Care Act Repeal, Senator Tim Scott (R-SC) Said He Doesn't "Put That Much Weight On The CBO Score," Claiming The Agency Is "Consistently Inconsistent." "I think CBO is a great organization that is consistently inconsistent with the actual results of a 10-year window because life changes so quickly so I don't put that much weight on a CBO score," Sen. Tim Scott, a Republican from South Carolina said." [CNN, [03/09/17](#)]

- **A Few Months Later, Senator Tim Scott Said The CBO's Estimates Were "Unrealistic," After It Found That "14 Million Americans Would Lose Coverage Because Of The End Of The [Affordable Care Act's] Individual Mandate.** "Other Senate Republicans were skeptical about the CBO's numbers. Tim Scott of South Carolina said that the CBO's assumption that 14 million Americans would lose coverage because of the end of the individual mandate was 'unrealistic.'" [The Guardian, [06/26/17](#)]

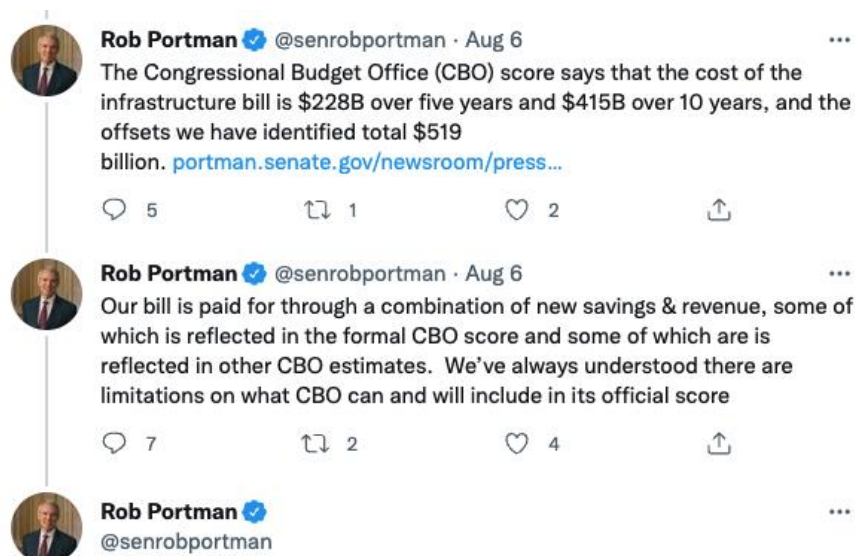
In A June 2017 Tweet, Senator Pat Toomey (R-PA) Criticized The CBO For Basing Its Estimates Of Healthcare Coverage On "Dubious Assumptions."

"The Congressional Budget Office's coverage estimates are based on dubious assumptions, such as millions of Americans foregoing free Medicaid because they are not forced to enroll by Obamacare's individual mandate. Numerous independent experts, including the nonpartisan CMS Office of the Actuary, have reached significantly different conclusions.

"As the discussion draft moves forward, the Senate should proceed carefully, avoid overreacting to questionable predictions, and stay focused on delivering on our promise to move health care in a more consumer-driven, sustainable direction on behalf of the millions of Americans who have been harmed by Obamacare's broken promises."

[Twitter, [06/07/17](#)]

In An August 2021 Twitter Thread, Senator Rob Portman (R-OH) Stated There Were "Limitations" To The CBO's Formal Scoring Model, Suggesting Its Calculations Of The Cost Of The Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill Were Not Entirely Accurate.



One example of CBO's limitations is that the fact that the formal score does not include states returning \$53 billion in unused funds from the enhanced UI supplement to the federal treasury as part of its formal score.

5:05 PM · Aug 6, 2021 · Twitter for iPhone

[Twitter, [08/06/21](#)]

Republican Lawmakers Have Also Undermined The CBO's Role By Claiming It's Scores Are "Hardly The Final Word On The Issue," With Some Going As Far As Saying The Agency Was "Entitled To Their Opinion."

In May 2017, Then-Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) Minimized The CBO's Role By Calling The Agency's Assessment That 23 Million More People Would Be Uninsured Over 10 Years A Mere "Procedural Step" In Republican Efforts To Repeal The Affordable Care Act. "Roughly 23 million more people would be uninsured over a decade if the House-passed Republican Obamacare repeal bill becomes law, according to a long-awaited CBO analysis that could complicate GOP hopes of getting a companion measure through the Senate. [...] Senate Republicans quickly downplayed the CBO's conclusions. [...] And Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell earlier in the day called the score a simple 'procedural step' that will allow the GOP to get on with its work." [Politico, [05/25/17](#)]

That Same Month, Senator James Lankford (R-OK) Said "Nothing About This CBO Score" Would Change His Mind About Repealing The Affordable Care Act. "Although our Senate bill will be different, we will carefully analyze this CBO report," Sen. James Lankford (R-

Okla.) said in a Facebook post. 'But nothing about this CBO score changes my approach to health care reform — we need a smooth transition from the Affordable Care Act to a better health care system and better coverage options for everyone.'" [Politico, [05/25/17](#)]

In March 2017, Representative Michael Burgess (R-TX) Understated The CBO's Projection Of How Many People Would Be Covered By The Affordable Care Act, Claiming The Agency Was "Hardly The Final Word On The Issue." "As part of their attacks, Republicans say CBO's projection from 2009 on the future impact of the Obamacare bill was off. 'The Congressional Budget Office in their own projections said 21 million people would be covered under the Affordable Care Act by the year 2016. That number in fact was 10 million so the Congressional Budget Office score while useful. ... (it) is hardly the final word on the issue,' said Rep. Michael Burgess of Texas." [CNN, [03/09/17](#)]

In January 2011, Former House Speaker John Boehner (R-OH) Diminished The CBO By Saying That The CBO Was "Entitled To Their Opinion." "'Well, I do not believe that repealing the job-killing health care law will increase the deficit,' Boehner replied. 'CBO is entitled to their opinion, but they're locked within constraints of the 1974 Budget Act. Listen, even the actuaries at the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid have made clear that this bill will not save the kind of money that was predicted earlier.'" [CBS News, [01/06/11](#)]

In March 2017, Then-House Majority Whip Steve Scalise (R-LA) Said He Would Not Let The CBO, Which He Called A Group Of "Unelected Bureaucrats," Slow Down Republican Efforts To Repeal The Affordable Care Act. "The No. 3 House Republican, Majority Whip Steve Scalise, said Wednesday he doesn't want to let 'unelected bureaucrats in Washington' slow down the Republican promise to repeal and replace Obamacare. 'We're not going to wait,' Scalise said." [CNN, [03/09/17](#)]

In March 2017, Senator Lindsey Graham (R-SC) Flatly Stated Republicans "'Like The CBO When They Agree With Us,'" But "'When They Don't, They're A Bunch Of Losers.'" "Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., no stranger to speaking his mind, even when it comes to criticism of his party, summarized the GOP's position Monday, telling reporters, 'We like the CBO when they agree with us. When they don't, they're a bunch of losers.'" [ABC News, [03/14/17](#)]