

The Delray Democrat

How Has Biden Responded to Republican Threats?¹

How Should He?

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What President Biden accomplished in his first two years is remarkable, given Democrats' five-seat majority in the House and an evenly split Senate (with one senator in the pay of fossil fuels and another in the pay of Big Pharma and hedge funds).

His jobs record is easily the strongest of any first-term president (see charts on page 6). The Inflation Reduction Act represents a historic investment in green energy (see page 8). And he redeemed what seemed more like a pipe dream than a promise to pass bipartisan legislation. See [Democrats Deliver](#).

Biden benefitted from his long tenure in the Senate as well as lessons learned as Obama's vice-president. As he faces Republican fiscal terrorism on the debt limit, he is dealing with a pack of unhinged and barely sane House members. How's he doing?

Unlike Obama, who had a habit of negotiating with himself before talking to Republicans, Biden drew a line in the sand yesterday, saying he "looks forward to meeting with Speaker McCarthy to discuss a range of issues," and then pointedly adding:

Raising the debt ceiling is not a negotiation; it is an obligation of this country and its leaders to avoid economic chaos. Congress has always done it, and the President expects them to do their duty once again. That is not negotiable.

Referring to Republicans' purported "fiscal plan to cut Social Security, cut Medicare, cut other vital programs, and impose a 30 percent national sales tax," Biden said he looked forward to hearing about it as well as telling them about his plan:

To cut the deficit, ... strengthen retirement programs, invest in key priorities, and fund it all by making the wealthy and big corporations pay their fair share.

He concluded by saying he is happy to "have a clear debate on two different visions for the country – one that cuts Social Security, and one that protects it."

Republicans don't care that they would lose that debate any more than they cared when blamed for the last five government shutdowns. They employ Nixon's [Madman Theory](#) to get what they want.

New York Times columnist Jamelle Bouie [suggests](#) that Biden call their bluff and declare the debt limit unconstitutional. It's not part of the Constitution, was never codified, and it interferes with the Constitutional directive that the president ensure "the Laws be faithfully executed" (which

¹ *The Delray Democrat*, January 2023, page 2.

includes paying for all obligations already created by Congress).

Finally, it also violates the Fourteenth Amendment's command that "The validity of the public debt of the United States . . . shall not be questioned."