

# Bill Kaplan: One hundred days

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Saturday marked one hundred days of Trump, House Speaker Paul Ryan and the GOP-led Congress. Compare to FDR in 1933. In his inaugural address FDR said: “the only thing we have to fear is fear itself.... Our greatest primary task is to put people to work.” FDR and a Democratic-led Congress moved quickly. The Public Works Administration was created to build bridges, dams, hospitals, municipal buildings, port facilities, road, schools and sewage systems. Jobs. Moreover, many other New Deal programs were established to help middle class and working people as well as the poor.

However, in his inaugural address all Trump had to offer was fear (the Women’s March dissipated the fear). Despite Trump’s dark vision, he did decry the “disrepair and decay” of our infrastructure. But unlike FDR, Trump and the GOP-led Congress have done nothing to appropriate federal funding for an infrastructure program. Zip. No jobs.

Their first priority was to repeal the Affordable Care Act (ACA) and take health care coverage from millions. This could result in 431,000 more uninsured in Wisconsin (Urban Institute). It failed from public outrage, GOP division and Democratic opposition. But as the hundred day mark neared, Trump with zero legislative accomplishments, renewed the cruel GOP effort to repeal the ACA. Blaming Ryan, the White House did an end run around the increasingly diminished Speaker Ryan, to collaborate with the most extreme House Republicans. So much for the separation of powers.

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Trumpcare two was worse than the original GOP crackpot bill: Diminished health

care protections, higher insurance charges for older and sicker folks, no Medicaid expansion, fewer people covered by private insurance and a huge tax cut for the wealthy. The bill was opposed by the public, the American Hospital Association, American Medical Association and AARP. By Thursday the legislation was dead, but like a zombie lives on the to-do list of Trump and Ryan. What's next?

Trump, always the showman, had something shiny to tout. A one page tax "reform" outline was floated: Humongous tax cuts for corporations and the wealthy, with trillions added to the national debt. And, Trump makes out like a bandit. The New York Times reported: Trump could personally save well-over \$1 billion from the changes he wants. Will Trump ever release his tax returns? There's more.

The hundred days have been a race to the bottom for Trump and Ryan: Their polls at historic lows, a do-nothing president, no substantive congressional legislation, a mutual record of cruelty and incompetence, theatrics and failed leadership. Meanwhile a constitutional crisis simmers. The Russians are coming.

The Washington Post reported: "Key lawmakers deliver bipartisan rebuke of Flynn". Bombshell revelations. Disgraced -fired Trump national security adviser Michael Flynn may have broken the law over his payments from Russian government entities and for working as a "paid foreign agent for Turkish interests...." What does Flynn know about possible Trump campaign coordination with Russian interference in the 2016 presidential election? Why does Flynn want immunity? Ryan needs to stop being Trump's enabler. The Constitution beckons.

— Kaplan wrote a guest column from Washington, D.C. for the *Wisconsin State Journal* from 1995 - 2009.