



Written by [Michael Tennant](#) on March 26, 2014

Drudge Says He's Begun Paying ObamaCare Penalty; Left Goes Berserk

Matt Drudge (shown), proprietor of the Drudge Report website, recently got ObamaCare supporters, including the White House, all riled up when he stated that he had already begun paying his individual-mandate penalty. Drudge, it seems, is refusing to purchase health insurance as required by the healthcare law and thus is liable for the penalty, which for 2014 comes to one percent of his income or \$95, whichever is higher, and increases in subsequent years.



At 10:09 a.m. on March 21, Drudge [tweeted](#): “Just paid the Obamacare penalty for not ‘getting covered’... I’M CALLING IT A LIBERTY TAX!”

Just 22 minutes later, White House Director of Progressive Media Jesse Lee [shot back](#): “Flat lie, no fee for previous year. Scary how much influence he [Drudge] once had.”

Other ObamaCare defenders also sprang into action.

“Dude, there’s no penalty until next yr,” Sahil Kapur of Talking Points Memo replied to Drudge’s tweet. Kapur’s colleague Dylan Scott posted a [piece](#) declaring that “either Drudge is lying or he paid a huge penalty a year earlier than he needed to.”

“Penalty is due, if no insurance, with your taxes. Since it starts 2014, it’s not due until 2015,” wrote Randy Slovacek of the Randy Report. “Hmm ... Doesn’t pass smell test.”

“Like many Conservatives, Matt Drudge is proud, proud, proud of being an idiot,” said ACTORSandCREW.

The [Huffington Post](#) and the [Washington Post](#) also got into the act, the former calling Drudge’s tweet “weird” and “a little head-scratching” and the latter attempting humor with the remark “Maybe that copy of ‘FurboTax’ he [Drudge] bought on Ebay wasn’t actually legit.”

Nor was the “compassionate” Left found wanting for retorts. Anthony Flores replied to Drudge’s tweet with “Good. Increased odds that Drudge will die,” and someone known as BidensGlasses commented, “We should waive the penalty for Drudge. It’s in ALL our interest for him to not be covered.”

Drudge, for his part, clearly enjoyed being the center of attention, even making the story the banner headline on his website for a while. Once Lee had announced that Drudge did not owe the penalty at this time, Drudge responded triumphantly, “WAIVER! White House just tweeted how us self-employed don’t have to pay 2014 1st Quarter Tax Estimates by April 15!”

That detail, which makes all the difference, is what ObamaCare’s partisans had overlooked in their haste to condemn Drudge. “While some, such as Timothy Geithner, can be Treasury secretary in the Obama administration while playing fast and loose with skirting their tax obligation, self-employed



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individuals who operate as small businesses do not,” observed [Investor’s Business Daily](#). They must estimate the taxes they will owe for the current year, and then pay those estimated taxes, on a quarterly basis.

“The estimates can be very complicated,” [Rush Limbaugh](#), another self-employed media figure, explained on his talk show Monday. “You can’t simply take what you earned last year and divide it by four and make those payments, because, if you underestimate how much you owe, you get socked with a huge penalty. So the safest thing to do is overpay a little bit.”

When it comes to the individual-mandate penalty, the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) recommends doing exactly that. The [instructions](#) for the quarterly estimated tax form for individuals state: “When you file your 2014 tax return in 2015, you will need to either (1) indicate on your return that you and your family had health care coverage throughout 2014, (2) claim an exemption from the health care coverage requirement for some or all of 2014, or (3) make a payment if you do not have coverage or an exemption(s) for all 12 months of 2014.... You may want to consider this when figuring your ‘Other taxes’ on Line 12 of the 2014 Estimated Tax Worksheet.”

As Drudge put it in another tweet, “Dazed team Obama media reporters think Opt-Out tax ‘year away’? Not for small businesses that file Qtr estimates. We’re there NOW, baby.”

“It is true that thousands of small businesses will be forced to pay Obamacare taxes quarterly in 2014,” a Senate Budget Committee aide told [Breitbart.com](#).

That, among other things, is why the Obama administration has handed out an ObamaCare [waiver for small-group policies](#) and made it possible for just about any individual to obtain a [“hardship exemption”](#) from the individual mandate. They don’t want the 14 million self-employed Americans and the many millions more employed by small businesses to feel the brunt of the law’s punishment until after the November elections.

Perhaps Drudge has applied for an exemption and is awaiting a response from the government, or perhaps he figures that, as persona non grata at the White House, he is unlikely to receive one. Certainly he is aware that the IRS, which is known to have targeted Obama administration opponents, will probably be scrutinizing his tax returns closely. Thus, noted [Examiner.com](#), “Drudge may be wisely inclined to make certain his IRS filings are pristine, even if it means overestimation. In his opinion, the price may be cheap, a well spent ‘Liberty tax.’”

Score one for Drudge, none for fans of the unconstitutional behemoth known as ObamaCare. Of course, those folks can easily enough wear a smile under the egg on their face because Drudge, after all, is being forced to cough up the money, even if not on the timetable they had thought. And while they may roll their eyes at Drudge’s moniker for the penalty, as [Investor’s Business Daily](#) pointed out, “When you tax something you get less of it, and certainly ObamaCare leaves us with less freedom. We lose the freedom to buy the insurance plans of our own choosing and the freedom to pick our doctors. Our nation was born in revolt against such oppressive taxation. The penalty imposed under ObamaCare for refusing to be compelled to buy a product you don’t want is indeed a tax on our liberty.”

Photo of Matt Drudge from 1998: AP Images



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