



Written by [Thomas R. Eddlem](#) on June 29, 2009

Obama's Broken No Tax Increase Pledge

Instead, [Stephanopoulos asked](#) Axelrod if Obama was considering breaking his campaign pledge not to raise the taxes of Americans making less than \$250,000 per year in order to pay for his healthcare program.

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Axelrod took a cue from the president by claiming both that the president would abide his oath and at the same time consider a tax increase on the middle class. Asked repeatedly to "draw a line in the sand" on the issue by Stephanopoulos after [the president hinted at accepting a tax increase on healthcare benefits](#), Axelrod [exclaimed](#) that "one of the problems we've had in this town is that people draw lines in the sand and they stop talking to each other. And you don't get anything done. That's not the way the president approaches us."



Barack Obama had pledged on [his campaign website](#) that "families making more than \$250,000 will pay either the same or lower tax rates than they paid in the 1990s." He also made a further and more explicit [pledge at a campaign stop in Dover, New Hampshire on September 11, 2008](#) that "I can make a firm pledge: Under my plan, no family making less than \$250,000 a year will see any form of tax increase, not your income tax, not your payroll tax, not your capital gains taxes, not any of your taxes." (see video below)

Now, apparently, Barack Obama has a new plan: tax the middle class. He's already backed and signed a huge tax increase on tobacco back in February, [bragging](#) about the legislation that [more than doubled the federal tax on tobacco](#) in [a press statement](#). Tobacco is consumed primarily by the poorest half of the population, thus [more than a few newspapers called him out for failing to heed his explicit campaign pledge](#) on that one. So much for Obama's campaign pledge not to increase the taxes of Americans making less than \$250,000.

Some Americans are perhaps willing to cut Obama some slack on his pledge when it comes to tobacco since that's a "sin tax." Never mind that Obama's pledge explicitly stated "not any of your taxes." But that's not the only instance Obama's pledge to the American people was broken. He has also called for massive new tax increases on the utility bills of all Americans with the American Clean Energy and Security Act of 2009, which is pending in the U.S. Senate as this column is being written. President Obama has [admitted](#): "Under my plan of a cap-and-trade system, electricity rates would necessarily skyrocket." That legislation would [increase taxes by more than \\$840 billion over the next 10 years](#) on all Americans.



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Obama's behavior on his tax pledge is reminiscent of an old joke about politicians:

Question: How can you tell when a politician is making a promise that's a lie?

Answer: Whenever his lips are moving.

However, the joke is not funny. It's on the American middle class, and it's with their money. And they're going to pay plenty for that joke.

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