

Letter: When politics trumps policy

To the community,

This nation has gone through 18 government shutdowns in the last 37 years. Fifteen of those 18 shutdowns occurred when Democrats controlled the House. In those 15 shutdowns, the Democrats demanded increased abortion services and labor and environmental policy concessions.

Perhaps the reason we don't remember those shutdowns as vividly is because in those days, presidents negotiated around the clock to resolve the disputes that caused them and did everything they could to minimize the public's inconvenience and suffering.



Tom McClintock

This time was different. This time, the President refused to negotiate and took unprecedented steps to amplify the pain and suffering that the public endured.

Why would the administration do this? They told us why – because they were winning politically.

What was the outrageous Republican demand that Democrats refused even to discuss during the 16-day shutdown while they ordered our public servants to make life as difficult as possible for people?

On Sept. 30, with the deadline just hours away, House Republicans had dropped all conditions to fund the entire government with one substantive exception: delay the individual mandate that forces people to buy policies against their will. Democrats summarily rejected this proposal and for 16 days refused to negotiate on this single point, while literally accusing Republicans of sedition.

Then this past Monday, the president's press secretary made this stunning admission: the Obama administration may itself seek to delay the individual mandate by dropping the penalty for non-compliance.

They've got to be kidding.

For the 16 days of the shutdown, the only substantive dispute was the Republican plea to delay the individual mandate for the millions of Americans who couldn't find or afford Obamacare policies.

Doing so could have ended the impasse instantly. During those 16 days, it was clear to everyone that the exchanges weren't working. Yet the president and congressional Democrats refused even to discuss the matter, while they turned their formidable propaganda machine to the task of winning politically.

These facts speak for themselves and need no embellishment from me. John Adams once observed that "Facts are stubborn things." As passions cool and reason resumes its rightful place in the nation's discourse, these facts will speak eloquently and stubbornly of what happens when politics trumps policy and propaganda trumps reality.

Sincerely,

Rep. Tom McClintock, R-Granite Bay