How Quickly We Forget: A Look Back at Obama-Era Agency Corruption and Big Spending

Since President Obama left office, congressional Democrats have developed a curious habit of pretending to be fiscal watchdogs. Unfortunately, they are only using federal spending as an excuse to feign moral outrage and play political theater.

While they do, let’s all maintain a little perspective. When it comes to ‘The Swamp,’ our current federal agency executives are tiny water bugs swimming among Obama-era alligators.

Below is a look back at some of the waste, fraud, and corruption that took place under the Obama administration. This list is by no means exhaustive. There is plenty more where this came from.

• Former Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner lived RENT-FREE in a JPMorgan top executive’s $3.5 million townhouse while overseeing the TARP bailout. JPMorgan ended up receiving $25 billion in federal rescue funds.¹

• A pair of Department of Veterans Affairs officials defrauded the VA for $400,000, and the Justice Department declined to press criminal charges. Not only did the two women stay on the VA payroll, they weren’t even demoted.²

• U.S. Administrator of General Services Martha Johnson green-lighted an $823,000 General Services Administration training conference in Las Vegas that included a clown, a mind reader, a $31,208 reception, and more than $8,000 in yearbooks to commemorate the conference.³

• Former House Speaker Nancy Pelosi requested nearly $200 million of luxury private jets to allow Democrat lawmakers and high-level bureaucrats to travel in style.⁴ Perhaps she was trying to keep up with defense secretary Leon Panetta, who took an Air Force C-37 from Washington to his home in California for the weekends, costing taxpayers $860,000.⁵

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¹ https://www.thedailybeast.com/treasury-secretary-timothy-geithners-wall-street-conflict
² https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/justice-dept-declines-to-prosecute-va-fraudsters
³ https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/gsa-chief-resigns-amid-reports-of-excessive-spending/2012/04/02/gIQABLNNrS_story.html?tid=ss_mail&utm_term=.195aeb537790
• The EPA’s then-highest paid employee and con artist John Beale defrauded taxpayers of $1 million pretending to be a CIA agent for 12 years. He also developed the EPA’s “secret science” strategy, which Pruitt is fighting to eliminate in the name of transparency.6

• Obama-era EPA administrators spent $961,856 on international travel, almost 8 times more than current EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt.7 Former EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy alone spent approximately $630,000 on international travel and security from 2013-2016.8

• From 2005-2015, the EPA spent $92.4 million to purchase, rent, install, and store high-end office furniture. This included an $800 pencil drawer, a $4,000 chair, and more than $73,000 to move existing furniture to replace the carpet in a Michigan office.9

• The EPA spent 35.2 percent more on contracts during the first six years of the Obama administration than in the Bush administration, an increase of $2.5 billion.10

• The EPA spent more than $141 million in salaries and $1.5 million in bonuses for in-house public relations staff from 2007-2015. The agency awarded itself $144 million in performance bonuses during that same time, and expensed $24,000 for trophies to give themselves during agency ceremonies in 2012 and 2013.11

If congressional Democrats want to talk about spending cuts and federal agency reforms, FreedomWorks welcomes them to the table. After all, real fiscal conservatives have been waiting to hold these conversations for decades.

But we can’t help but wonder, where have they been the past eight years?

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7 http://freebeacon.com/issues/obama-epa-administrators-spent-eight-times-pruitt-international-travel/
8 https://gop.com/double-standard-101/