

# In Trump's White House, Everything's Coming in 'Two Weeks'

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- The president has a penchant for making and missing deadlines
  - Tax and infrastructure plans are taking longer than promised
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President Donald Trump has a plan. It'll be ready in two weeks.

From overhauling the tax code to releasing an infrastructure package to making decisions on Nafta and the Paris climate agreement, Trump has a common refrain: A big announcement is coming in just "two weeks." It rarely does.

On Feb. 9, Trump boasted that his administration was "way ahead of schedule" on a tax overhaul.

"We're going to be announcing something I would say over the next two or three weeks that will be phenomenal in terms of tax and developing our aviation infrastructure," Trump said while meeting with airline executives.

Eleven weeks elapsed before the White House released a one-page outline of the tax plan.

In an April 29 interview on "CBS This Morning" Trump said of his promised \$1 trillion infrastructure construction program: "We've got the plan largely completed and we'll be filing over the next two or three weeks -- maybe sooner," Trump said.

No legislation has been filed. The White House has yet to outline the plan, beyond broad principles described in Trump's proposed budget.

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## Self-Imposed Deadlines

Trump's habit of self-imposing -- then missing -- two-week deadlines for major announcements has become a staple of his administration as it's struggled to amass policy wins. The president has used two-week timelines to sidestep questions from reporters or brag to CEOs at the White House. But his pronouncements have also flummoxed investors, Congress and occasionally even members of his staff.

The president's inability to meet his own deadlines highlights his struggle adjusting to the pace of Washington. It also foreshadows the trouble that lies ahead as his administration faces a series of hard deadlines in Congress over the next few months.

"The president and his team work around the clock to fulfill the promises he has made to the American people," White House spokeswoman Lindsay Walters said in a statement listing some of Trump's accomplishments as president. "There is no question that this administration has been turning the president's promises into policy at a remarkable rate."

It's been 15 weeks since Trump promised an aviation infrastructure proposal in two weeks. Trump sent a set of "principles" for overhauling the U.S. air-traffic control system <<https://www.bloomberg.com/politics/articles/2017-06-05/trump-endorses-controversial-u-s-air-traffic-spinoff-proposal>> to Congress on Monday.

## Paris Deal

At an April 29 rally, Trump drew applause when he promised an imminent announcement on whether he'd keep the U.S. in a landmark global climate agreement.

"And I'll be making a big decision on the Paris accord over the next two weeks," Trump said in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

A month later, Trump was still weighing his decision. Top advisers said his thoughts continued to evolve. Trump announced his decision to pull the U.S. out of the agreement on June 1.

Trump's penchant for casually announcing short deadlines without a plan to make good on them underscores his improvisational approach to the presidency, said Barbara Perry, a presidential historian at the University of Virginia's Miller Center of Public Affairs. Skills the one-time reality television star honed in New York's impulse-driven media and real-estate circles haven't translated well in the halls of Washington, Perry said.

"For someone who bills himself as the master of the art of the deal, well, where's the art and where's the deal?" she said. "Trump continues to be in campaign mode with a lot of promises that he's not fulfilling."

## Campaign Bombast

Since taking office, Trump has continued to employ the bombast of his campaign, where he pitched voters a presidency full of easy wins and quick fixes. At various times, Trump has claimed to be "ahead of schedule" on building a border wall, fixing veterans' health care, cutting taxes, repealing regulations and releasing a school-choice plan.

On June 1, Trump said tax legislation was "moving along in Congress," although no such bill has been filed. When journalists have asked Trump about specific policy positions or the progress he's made fulfilling his campaign promises, Trump has repeatedly retreated to his "two weeks" line.

"We're going to make an announcement in two weeks," Trump said in an April 5 interview with the New York Times, when asked his position on the Davis-Bacon law regulating wages on federally funded infrastructure projects. "It's going to be good."

The Trump administration has made no announcement on the Davis-Bacon law.

In a March 15 interview on Fox News, Trump was asked about his March 4 tweets accusing former President Barack Obama of wiretapping Trump Tower. Fox News's Tucker Carlson asked the president why he made the accusation without providing any evidence.

"I think you're going to find some very interesting items coming to the forefront over the next two weeks," Trump said.

The White House has never produced evidence of illegal wiretapping by Obama. During a House Intelligence Committee hearing on March 20, top intelligence officials said there was no evidence supporting the president's claim.

## **Art of Exaggeration**

In his 1987 book, "The Art of the Deal," Trump defended "an innocent form of exaggeration" as a useful negotiating strategy.

But he also offered a warning about over-promising and not delivering.

"You can't con people, at least not for long. You can create excitement, you can do wonderful promotion and get all kinds of press, and you can throw in a little hyperbole," he wrote. "But if you don't deliver the goods, people will eventually catch on."

Trump has recently taken his promotional approach abroad.

"We are doing very well in the fight against ISIS," Trump said May 21 during a meeting in Saudi Arabia with the emir of Kuwait, Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmed Al-Sabah. "We're going to be having a news conference in about two weeks to let everybody know how well we're doing."

Officials in the White House press office were unaware of plans for a news conference focused on the war against Islamic State militants.

Two weeks have passed. No news conference has been announced.