It's Official: Obama Formally Orders Sequestration Cuts

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President Barack Obama formally ordered broad cuts in U.S. government spending on Friday night after

he and congressional Republicans failed to reach a deal to avert automatic reductions that could dampen economic growth and curb military readiness. As the United States staggered into another fiscal crisis, the White House predicted that the spending cuts triggered by the inability of Obama and lawmakers to forge a broader deficit-reduction agreement would be "deeply destructive" to the nation's economic and national security."Not everyone will feel the pain of these cuts right away. The pain though will be real. Beginning this week, many middle-class families will have their lives disrupted in significant ways," Obama told journalists after his meeting with Republican and Democratic congressional leaders.

Obama signed an order that put in effect the across-the-board government spending cuts known as "sequestration." Government agencies will now begin to hack a total of $85 billion from their budgets between Saturday and Oct. 1. Half of the cuts will fall on the Pentagon.

Democrats predicted the cuts could soon cause air-traffic delays, meat shortages as food safety inspections slow down, losses to thousands of federal contractors and damage to local economies across the country, particularly in the hardest-hit regions around military installations. Republicans do not want to concede again on taxes after doing so in negotiations over the "fiscal cliff" at the New Year. But partisan gridlock has prevented agreement on where to save.

At the heart of Washington's persistent fiscal crises is disagreement over how to slash the budget deficit and the $16 trillion national debt, bloated over the years by wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and government stimulus for the ailing economy. As a percentage of total government spending every year, $3.7 trillion, the actual spending reductions are small. But because safety-net programs such as Social Security and Medicare will be untouched, the brunt falls mostly on federal government employees rather than direct recipients of aid. The U.S. government is the nation's largest employer, with a workforce of roughly 2.7 million civilians. If the cuts stay in place, more than 800,000 of those workers could see reduced work days and smaller paychecks between now and September. Furlough notices warning employees and their unions started to go out earlier this week and the pace picked up on Friday after it became clear that talks at the White House between Obama and congressional leaders would be fruitless.

1. In appropriate paragraph form, compare and contrast the pros and cons synonymous with the aforementioned sequestration. Do you personally believe this highly debatable fiscal management measure will aid in strengthening the national economy? What actions if any might we as Americans actively employ to assist in the ultimate stabilization of the federal government budget coupled with the economy? Thoroughly explain your reasoning and provide specific artifacts and evidence not limited solely to passage above to support your response. Create and illustrate Venn Diagrams to effectively explore relationships and patterns and to make arguments about relationships between sets. **(LA.910.3.2.2; LA.910.1.6.2; MA.912.D.7.2; MA.912.A.10.1)**

2. Identify the theoretical probability in randomly selecting the following letters from the capitalized word "SEQUESTRATION" with <u>and</u> without replacement: a. *P* (vowel then vowel), b. *P* (consonant then consonant), c. *P* (E then E), d. *P* (consonant then vowel), e. *P* (Q then Q), and f. *P* (letter then letter). What is meant by the complement of an event? Identify how these results may differ in the event experimental probability was employed as opposed to theoretical. When are these events dependent as opposed to independent? What percentage of government employees may involuntarily encounter reduced workdays and smaller paychecks between now and September? **(MA.912.A.1.4; MA.912.A.2.13; MA.912.A.10.1; MA.912.A.1.1)**

3. The Secret Service is a federal law enforcement agency attached to the Department of Homeland Security. One of their primary objectives is to ensure the safety of current and former national leaders and their families. A critical task as an agent is to serve as a lookout. During his sequestration speech, the lookouts identify a suspicious individual, measure the angle of their perspective, and disseminate concerns electronically via a covert audio communication device. A strategically placed agent uses the angle to locate the suspect. Illustrate the diagram to determine specifically how many lookouts are required to locate the perpetrator. Classify the triangle formed by its sides, measure the angles formed, and classify the triangle by its angles. Thoroughly explain your reasoning via the applicable Congruence Postulate or Theorem. **(MA.912.G.1.2; MA.912.G.2.3; MA.912.G.4.1; MA.912.G.4.3; MA.912.G.4.4; MA.912.G.4.6)**

4. Using contextual clues <u>only</u>, define the following italicized terms: *furlough, stimulus, partisan, concede, sequestration,* and *ailing* as obtained from the passage above. Additionally, use each word in a complete sentence to demonstrate further comprehension. **(LA.910.1.6.3; LA.910.1.6.1)**

5. **SARASOTA MILITARY ACADEMY WORD-OF-THE-WEEK** Create a concluding paragraph aligned with the passage above using the following italicized word: *Gregarious* (GAIR ee us) (adj.) Seeking and enjoying the company of others. Sociable. **(LA.910.1.6.1; LA.910.1.6.5)**