



Week in Regulation

Regulatory Faucet Remains Off

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As of this past weekend, the current partial government shutdown set the record for the longest shutdown in U.S. history. With many agencies still shuttered, the pages of the Federal Register remain extraordinarily barren. There were no quantified estimates of costs, savings, or paperwork burdens in last week's minimal portfolio of rulemakings. The American Action Forum (AAF), however, did release a [retrospective look](#) at regulatory trends in 2018 – the first year we have found that had net cost savings across all final rules.

REGULATORY TOPLINES

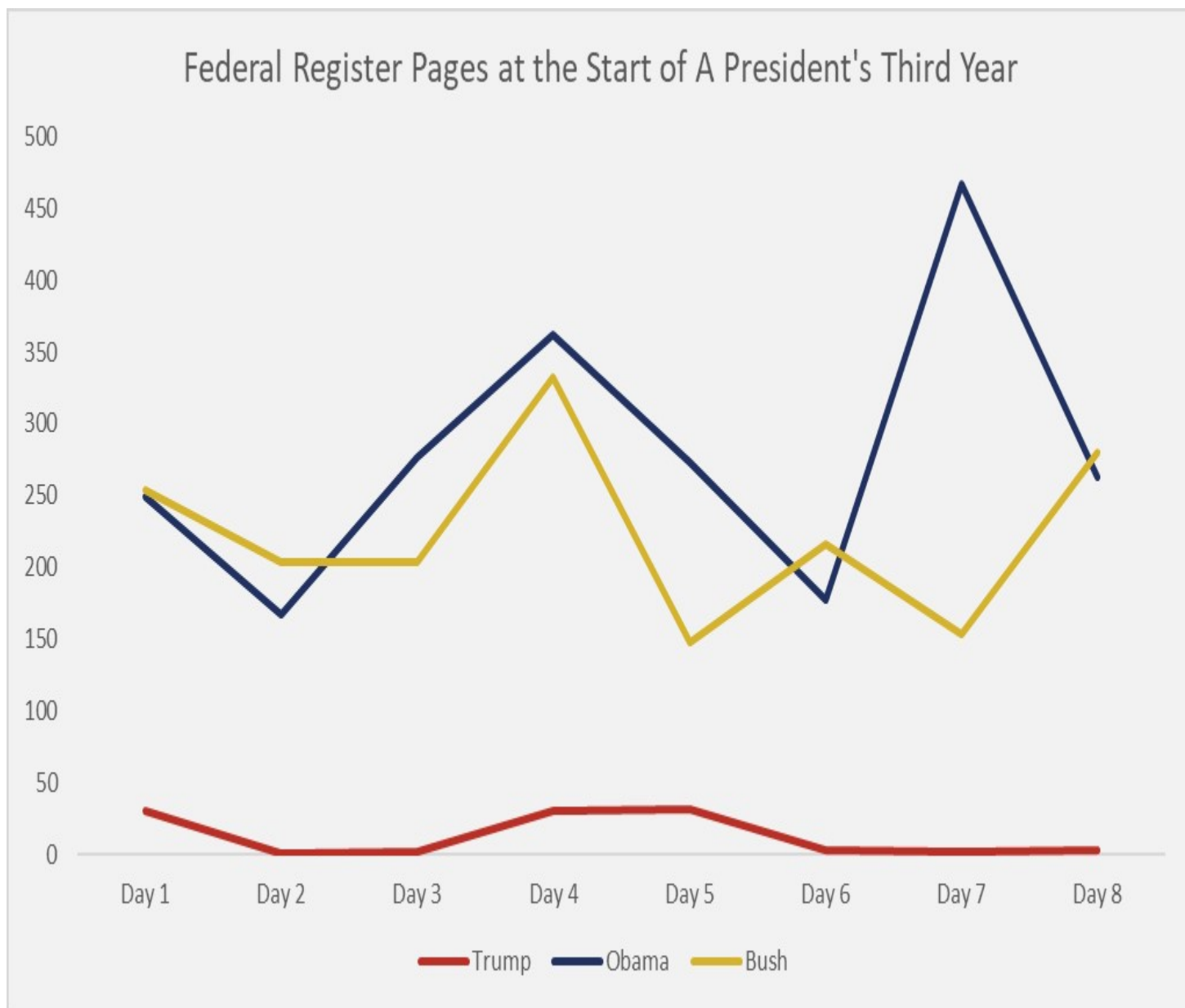
- New Proposed Rules: N/A
- New Final Rules: 2
- 2019 Total Pages: 102
- 2019 Final Rule Costs: N/A
- 2019 Proposed Rule Costs: N/A

TRACKING THE REGULATORY BUDGET

So far in fiscal year (FY) 2019 (which began on October 1, 2018), there have been 22 deregulatory actions (per the rubric created by Executive Order (EO) 13,771 and the administration's subsequent [guidance document](#)) against nine rules that increase costs and fall under the EO's reach. Combined, these actions yield quantified net costs of roughly \$1.4 billion. This, however, includes the caveat regarding the baseline in the Department of Agriculture's "[National Bioengineered Food Disclosure Standard](#)." If one considers that rule to be deregulatory, the agency-wide net total is approximately \$5.3 billion in net savings. The administration's cumulative savings goal for [FY 2019](#) is approximately \$18 billion.

THIS WEEK'S REGULATORY PICTURE

One can describe "regulatory policy" in many ways: mundane, opaque, monotonous, complex, legalistic. The list goes on. In order to provide a clearer and more straight-forward view into this world, AAF will present a brief illustration of a notable regulatory trend we have identified in a given week. This week's entry: putting this shutdown period into further historical context.



While page count is an imperfect measure of *regulatory impact* (it can take hundreds of pages to either [regulate](#) or [deregulate](#)), it does provide a metric of *regulatory activity*. As of last Friday, there have been eight work-days in 2019. Over the course of those eight days, this year's volume of the Federal Register has barely crept over 100 pages. The most expansive single issue – “[Day 5](#)” – tops out at 31 pages. To provide the most comparable time-frame possible, the above graph compares the output over this span against that during the first eight work-days of the third year for Presidents Bush and Obama (2003 and 2011, respectively). The contrast is quite stark. A more “typical” period averages hundreds of pages a day; a majority of 2019's days thus far have been in the single digits. How long this trend continues remains to be seen.

TOTAL BURDENS

Since January 1, the federal government has published \$0 in net costs or savings and paperwork burdens have not changed. [Click here](#) for the latest Reg Rodeo findings.

