1. FACTCHECKER:

*Heller also said, “We’re at $17 trillion in debt” and that Obama had promised to cut the debt from $10 trillion when he came into office to $5 trillion.*

I would then look at whether Obama indeed made that promise and what the debt is now and whether it’s rising or falling.

HELLER RESPONSE:

Obama said that holding such an enormous amount of our debt was “unpatriotic” and “irresponsible” when saying that President Bush raised the debt from 5 trillion to 9 trillion.

Source:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1kuTG19Cu_Q>

Projected debt under Obama’s economy will rise to 27 trillion dollars by 2024 (page 17). That’s a difference of 16 trillion.

2009: 11 trillion

2014: 17 trillion   
2024: 27 trillion

According to CBO: “The large budget deficits recorded in recent years have substantially increased federal debt, and the amount of debt relative to the size of the economy is now very high by historical standards. CBO estimates that federal debt held by the public will equal 74 percent of GDP at the end of this year and 79 percent in 2024 (the end of the current 10-year projection period). Such large and growing federal debt could have serious negative consequences, including restraining economic growth in the long term, giving policymakers less flexibility to respond to unexpected challenges, and eventually increasing the risk of a fiscal crisis (in which investors would demand high interest rates to buy the government’s debt).”

Source:

CBO Budget and Economic Outlook: 2014 – 2024 <https://www.cbo.gov/publication/45010>

1. FACTCHECKER:

*Heller said, “We have a president who as a United States senator said he was going to cut this deficit in half.” He added that if we want to be serious in this country about deficits, then Obama’s budgets are a problem.*

I would then look at whether Obama has cut the deficit in half and whether his budgets have addressed deficit spending.

HELLER RESPONSE:

CBO [projected](http://www.cbo.gov/sites/default/files/cbofiles/ftpdocs/99xx/doc9957/01-07-outlook.pdf) in Jan 2009 (when Obama took office and all of the economic conditions that were present) that our deficits (p. 15) would be as follows. The [actual](http://cbo.gov/publication/44716) deficits by CBO also follow.

2009: Projected: -1.186t; Actual: -1.413t [+19%]

2010: Projected: -703b; Actual: -1.294t [+84%]

2011: Projected: -498b; Actual: -1.3t [+161%]

2012: Projected: -264b; Actual: -1.09t [+312%]

2013: Projected: -257b; Actual: -680b [+164%]

Sources

CBO 2009 Projections: <http://www.cbo.gov/sites/default/files/cbofiles/ftpdocs/99xx/doc9957/01-07-outlook.pdf> (page 16)

CBO 2009 Actual deficits: <http://cbo.gov/publication/44716>

**From the CBO Budget and Economic Outlook of 2014:**

**Deficits Are Projected to Decline Through 2015 but Rise Thereafter, Further Boosting Federal Debt**

Assuming no legislative action that would significantly affect revenues or spending, CBO projects that the federal budget deficit will fall from 4.1 percent of GDP last year to 2.6 percent in 2015—**and then rise again, equaling about 4 percent of GDP between 2022 and 2024.** That pattern of lower deficits initially and higher deficits for the rest of the coming decade would cause federal debt to follow a similar path. Relative to the nation’s output, debt held by the public is projected to decline slightly between 2014 and 2017, to 72 percent of GDP, but then to rise in later years, reaching 79 percent of GDP at the end of 2024. By comparison, as recently as the end of 2007, such debt equaled 35 percent of GDP (see the figure below).

Comment: CBO makes Senator Heller’s point. These budgets are still a problem.

Source:

CBO Budget and Economic Outlook: 2014 – 2024 <https://www.cbo.gov/publication/45010>

1. FACTCHECKER:

*Senator Heller said that “the majority party only allowed four amendments in the last six months.”*

*I no longer need a response to the amendment questions. There is no dispute over what Heller said, according to Reid’s office, just the context about the statement. Reid’s response is that a higher amount of minority amendments has happened under his leadership than under previous speakers. And his office says it’s an unfair charge because there were Republican amendments blocked by Republicans, such as Sen. Heller’s unemployment insurance amendment. If you have a response to any of that, I'd certainly be happy to talk about it. If not, that’s OK, too.*

HELLER RESPONSE:

Given your recent feedback, we understand you are disputing the claim. While there have been recent Republican-backed amendments since the editorial board, including Heller’s amendment, given the timing, those should not be taken into consideration regarding the truthfulness of the claim.