

Senate Begins Debate Over 'Fast-Track' of Obamacare Repeal

Senate Republicans scored the first major victory in their effort to repeal the Affordable Care Act, otherwise known as Obamacare.

By a largely party-line vote, a procedural vote to begin debate on a "fast-track process" passed by a 51-48 margin. Every Democrat, and Sen. Rand Paul (R-Ky.), who has concerns about the way GOP legislators plan to replace the health care law, opposed the vote.

"Repeal is just the first step," Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) said. "It will take time to undo the damage of this law."

The beginning of the repeal process has been built into the 2017 budget bill, which allows Republicans to pass it while avoiding a Democratic filibuster. Democrats have taken up a new means of attacking the move, saying it will "Make America Sick Again," a play on President-elect Donald Trump's campaign slogan in the 2016 presidential race.

Vice President-elect Mike Pence was on Capitol Hill to meet with legislative leaders in both chambers on Wednesday. After meeting with House Republican leaders, he held a press conference at which he announced the Trump-Pence administration expects to see a full repeal bill on the president's desk by Feb. 20.