

Senate Health Care Effort Falls Apart, or Does It?

Monday night, two more Republicans announced they could not support the revised “discussion draft” of the Better Care Reconciliation Act, much to the delight of Democrats and the liberal mainstream media, who quickly declared the health care bill dead.

But was it?

Sen. Mike Lee, R-Utah, was the first to announce he was jumping ship:

After conferring with trusted experts regarding the latest version of the Consumer Freedom Amendment, I have decided I cannot support the current version of the Better Care Reconciliation Act. In addition to not repealing all of the Obamacare taxes, it doesn't go far enough in lowering premiums for middle class families; nor does it create enough free space from the most costly Obamacare regulations.

Sen. Jerry Moran, R-Kan., was the second:

There are serious problems with Obamacare, and my goal remains what it has been for a long time: to repeal and replace it. This closed-door process has yielded the BCRA, which fails to repeal the Affordable Care Act or address healthcare's rising costs. For the same reasons I could not support the previous version of this bill, I cannot support this one.

We should not put our stamp of approval on bad policy. Furthermore, if we leave the federal government in control of everyday health care decisions, it is more likely that our health care system will devolve into a single-payer

system, which would require a massive federal spending increase. We must now start fresh with an open legislative process to develop innovative solutions that provide greater personal choice, protections for preexisting conditions, increased access and lower overall costs for Kansans.

Even if Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., who was sidelined over the weekend due to an emergency surgery to remove a blood clot on his brain, were able to vote, Republicans would have, at most, just 49 votes—and many other Republicans were still on the fence—to pass the legislation. With the media declaring the BCRA as “dead” or “collapsing,” President Donald Trump used his bully pulpit one more time to press for a “clear repeal bill,” urging Republicans in Congress to do what they promised they would do for the past seven and a half years.

He tweeted:

Republicans should just ‘REPEAL’ failing ObamaCare now & work on a new Healthcare Plan that will start from a clean slate. Dems will join in!

Vice President Mike Pence joined in the call for a full repeal of the Affordable Care Act, as well:

Well said @POTUS. We must keep our promise to end the Obamacare nightmare. Repeal now and replace later. Inaction is not an option.

It seems as though Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., may have finally gotten the message. His office released the following statement late Monday night:

Regretfully, it is not apparent that the effort to repeal and immediately replace the failure Obamacare will not be successful. So, in the coming days, the Senate will vote to take up the House bill with the first amendment in order being what a majority of the Senate already supported in

2015 and that was vetoed by then-President Obama: a repeal of Obamacare with a two-year delay to provide for a state transition period to a patient-centered health care system that gives Americans access to quality, affordable care.

If that indeed is what the Senate passes this week, the only sticking point between the House and Senate would be the time frame in which Obamacare is repealed. With many states losing options in the individual health insurance market; however, two years may be too little too late for most Americans.

Neither Speaker of the House Paul Ryan, R-Wis., nor House Freedom Caucus Chairman Mark Meadows, R-N.C., have responded to the news as of this writing. {eo}