

Tom Price's Confirmation Means the Beginning of the End for Obamacare

U.S. Rep. Tom Price (R-Ga.) was confirmed early Friday morning to be the next head of the Department of Health & Human Services with the primary responsibility of repealing, repairing and replacing the Affordable Care Act, also known as Obamacare.

In the minds of many around the country, the clock is ticking and time is short.

The vote to confirm Price was purely along party lines, 52-47, with Sen. Clare McCaskill (D-Mo.) refusing to vote. Democrats had used Senate procedures to delay the vote to the maximum 30 hours after the cloture vote was held, and other business in the chamber forced the vote back to 2 a.m. EST Friday.

Sources at the White House and at Capitol Hill say much of the plans to deal with Obamacare had been put on hold until Price was confirmed. A staunch critic of the health insurance legislation, Price—who is an orthopedic surgeon by profession—had been working with the president throughout the transition to craft a plan.

Also early Friday morning, the Senate advanced the confirmation of Treasury Secretary-designate Steven Mnuchin on a 53-46 vote. McCaskill again refused to vote, and Sen. Joe Manchin (D-W.V.) broke party lines to support moving the nomination to a full vote, which is now scheduled for 7 p.m. EST Monday.

Also on Thursday evening, Sen. Luther Strange (R-Ala.) was sworn in as the replacement for Attorney General Jeff Sessions. Strange, the very conservative former Attorney

General of Alabama, is considered the front runner for the upcoming special election to permanently fill the seat. He voted on both Price's confirmation and the cloture vote for Mnuchin. {eo}