



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on July 11, 2012

House Votes to Repeal ObamaCare, Again

In a highly theatrical [vote](#) in the U.S. House of Representatives on Wednesday, members of the House voted to repeal Obama's signature healthcare law. Congressional Republicans have been working on repeal measures to undo ObamaCare virtually since the legislation was passed, but the controversial Supreme Court ruling that found the individual mandate to be constitutional, thereby upholding the law, has prompted the GOP to turn its attention to healthcare once again.



Five Democrats joined the Republican majority in the 244-185 vote, though Democratic leaders had warned that several of their caucus members facing tough re-election battles in November might side with the Republicans on the volatile issue.

Wednesday's vote is just one of a number of efforts in the House undertaken by the GOP to overturn the healthcare law; however, despite the easy success of the repeal vote, it is expected to go nowhere in the Democrat-controlled Senate.

Still, the vote was highly contentious. Republicans rejected a motion proposed by House Democrats to require any legislator supporting the repeal measure to give up government-provided healthcare.

Democrats contend that debates on repealing the healthcare law should have died once the Supreme Court declared the law to be constitutional.

Rep. Steny Hoyer of Maryland is accusing Republicans of being fixated on the healthcare repeal efforts. "It's a sad spectacle that we see this week where none of the debate on the floor is going to lead to legislation which will create jobs and grow our economy," he told reporters.

But Republicans note that the American people continue to remain opposed to the law, and assert that they are subject to the priorities of their constituents.

"This happens to be the seminal issue of our time," Rep. Jeb Hensarling (R-Texas) told CNN on Wednesday. "...Those of us who want patient-centered health care have had two years to repeal it. I think it's kind of unreasonable to think we're going to go away."

The most recent Rasmussen Reports national telephone [survey](#) finds that 53 percent of likely U.S. voters at least somewhat favor the repeal of the health care law, while 41 percent are opposed. These findings include 43 percent who strongly favor repeal and 31 percent who strongly oppose it.

In the debate leading up to the House vote, members of both parties revisited many of the same arguments that were utilized in 2010, when the law was passed.

"This law is historic, but for all the wrong reasons," argued Rep. Sam Graves (R-Mo.). "It reaches too far into the personal decisions of Americans and it puts a heavy burden on our economy and small businesses. It's an example of big government at its absolute worst."

Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz of Florida, the Democratic National Committee chair, bemoaned the



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multiple House votes to repeal all or part of the health reform law that have taken place since the law's passage. "It is time to stop the tantrums, grow up, and work together on Americans' number one priority — creating jobs," she said.

While Republicans are working to overturn ObamaCare, the *Associated Press* notes that it has yet to offer an alternative, despite the oft-used campaign promises of many of the newly elected members of the GOP to "repeal and replace" ObamaCare.

The *Associated Press* reports, "Republican officials said the general reluctance to sketch any sort of alternative resulted from a desire to focus public attention on the healthcare law itself. It generally fares poorly in public polling, both nationally and in surveys of independent voters."

Additionally, Republicans have failed to reach an agreement on the specifics of an alternative to the highly unpopular ObamaCare. Some have suggested changing specific parts of the healthcare system, while others have recommended capping malpractice judgments, and allowing insurance to be sold across state lines.

In fact, there has been just one Republican legislative alternative. According to the AP, that measure included capping malpractice judgments, allowing the sale of insurance across state lines, permitting small businesses to combine their money to purchase coverage for employees, and providing funds to the states to help maintain high-risk insurance pools for those with pre-existing conditions.

The Congressional Budget Office estimated that the 2009 Republican alternative would have reduced health premiums, but in the end, would have had little impact on the number of individuals uninsured.

Some Republicans have acknowledged that the healthcare system needs reform, however. According to Republican South Carolina Senator Jim DeMint, the goal is to ultimately "give the states more flexibility to help individuals find their own health insurance, policies that they can keep from job to job, and hopefully into retirement. And a lot of states have begun that process."

Republicans are even crediting President Obama and the Democrats with leading the fight to achieve a better healthcare system.

DeMint stated, "We appreciate some of the goals of the president. We need every American to have access to affordable health insurance."

But unlike the Democrats, Republicans continue to believe that such a goal is best achieved at the state level.

"The best way to do that is at ... the state level that respects the relationship between the patient and the doctor," DeMint noted.

Since Republicans have failed to unify around a single alternative to ObamaCare, House Republicans are finding unity in their shared opposition to Obama's healthcare law.

"This is nothing short of economic malpractice," said Rep. Nan Hayworth of New York, citing tax increases, government mandates and other items in the law. "We can and we must do better."

With little hopes of the repeal vote passing in the Senate, however, some members of Congress are encouraging state governments to virtually nullify the law by refusing to comply with the health insurance exchanges and Medicaid expansion.

In a statement released by DeMint, the senator asks state governors to consider that approach.



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“I urge every governor to stop implementing the health care exchanges that would help implement the harmful effects of this misguided law. Americans have loudly rejected this federal takeover of health care, and governors should join with the people and reject its implementation.”

Photo: House Majority Whip Kevin McCarthy of Calif., leaves the House chamber on July, 11, 2012, after the Republican-controlled House voted 244-185 to repeal President Barack Obama's

health care law: AP Images



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