



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on September 19, 2013

House Speaker Boehner Schedules ObamaCare Vote for Friday

House Speaker John Boehner (R-Ohio)  [announced on Wednesday](#) that he would schedule a vote for Friday on his newly revised bill to continue government spending at current levels but without funding for ObamaCare, in response to pressure from a small but critically important group of Tea Party conservatives. Fresh from the hustings, that group, estimated to be about 40 in number, have been reminded afresh of their constituents' demands to stop ObamaCare before it becomes cemented into place on October 1, and they forced Boehner to revise his original bill to include defunding critical parts of the president's healthcare law.

Members of that group included Rep. Marlin Stutzman (R-Ind.) who said, "We're doing what the American people are asking us to do. I think now is the time. You take the best opportunity that you have." Rep. Tom Graves (R-Ga.) added, "I think over the next 12 days there's going to be a strong argument from the American people that this is the path forward." Rep. Tim Huelskamp (R-Kan.) was even stronger, saying he would not vote for any bill that funded ObamaCare: "This is the line in the sand." Rep. Steve Scalise (R-La.) said that ObamaCare "is a devastating law that's having a devastating impact on all of our health care across the country."

The bill puts the onus on the Senate to pass the bill to keep the government running but without funding ObamaCare, or reject the bill and not allow government spending beyond October 1. The president claims that passage of such a bill will shut down the government and it will be the Republicans' fault. But Rep. Luke Messer (R-Ind.), another member of the recalcitrant group of 40, said the president has got the message backward: "The president [would shut] down the government because he wants to protect Obamacare."

Senator Marco Rubio [agreed with that assessment](#). In an interview with Newsmax TV, Rubio said he was pleased that Boehner was forced to revise his bill before sending it to the House floor:

That's very positive news. It's now going to call attention to the fact that we can keep the government open, we can fund the government, we don't have to shut down the government, and we don't have to fund Obamacare.

It's the president who's threatening to shut down the government because he's saying ... that unless they fund Obamacare, they won't fund the government...

If ... the government shuts down, it will be ... because the president and his allies believe that Obamacare is so important to them that they are willing to shut down the government over it.

Speaker Boehner said that if his revised bill passes the House, the Senate will be forced to deal with it:



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“We’re going to put Obamacare defunding directly into the [bill]. And then we’re going to send it over to the Senate so our conservative allies over there can continue the fight. That’s where the fight is.”

That fight could be nasty, or it could result in the Senate simply stripping out the offensive defunding language and sending it back to the House for another vote. Although Senator Ted Cruz (R-Texas) called Boehner’s decision “[terrific news](#),” he was less clear about just how the outnumbered Republicans would continue that fight. Cruz was dismissive of any attempt to filibuster against the bill:

Harry Reid will no doubt try to strip the defund language from the continuing resolution [passed by the House], and right now he likely has the votes to do so.

At that point, House Republicans must stand firm, hold their ground, and continue to listen to the American people.

To some this appeared to be waving the white flag of surrender in the Senate. One House GOP aide exclaimed: “We expect them stand and filibuster like Rand Paul.” Said another: “It’s time [for Republican Senators like Cruz and Rubio] to put on the big boy pants. Maybe this will wean us of the bed-wetters.”

The bill, if passed as expected by the House, won’t necessarily sail through the Senate and be bounced immediately back to the House. As the *Wall Street Journal* [noted](#):

Because of potential delaying tactics [employed by Republicans], it could take a week or more for Senate Democrats to pass [the] bill, and they would need 60 votes at several junctures. If senators move to whittle the [Boehner] bill into a simple short-term funding extension, they would need six Republicans to vote with the 54 Democrats and allied senators.

The establishment is getting increasingly nervous about the matter. Senator Charles Schumer (D-N.Y.) [was livid](#) about the House Tea Party conservatives standing in the way of continuing government spending, including fully funding ObamaCare, saying, “They’re on a different planet!” He added:

This small group of people, who even Republicans know are off the deep end on this issue, have the Republican leadership in the House so shaken and scared that that leadership is going along with that insane plan.

Even the *New York Times* editorial board was so concerned about the matter that it [inveighed against](#) that rebel group, repeating Harry Reid’s ad hominem that called them “the anarchists.” Said the board:

On Wednesday ... the full Republican caucus, leadership and all, joined the anarchy movement, announcing plans to demand the defunding of health care reform as the price for keeping the government open past September 30th....

By choosing this as their live-or-die issue, Republicans are driving straight toward the brink and removing the brake pedal.

The rant by the *Times*’ board continued, reiterating that such a plan had little chance of success, that nothing would have changed, that the Republicans are wasting critical political capital playing a game they cannot win:

As a strategy, the House plan makes little sense. After the House takes its vote this week to approve a temporary resolution that pays for the government to keep running through mid-December — but defunds the health law — the measure will go to the Senate.



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Assuming 60 votes can be found to beat back the inevitable filibuster from Republicans like Mike Lee or Ted Cruz, the Senate will almost certainly approve the resolution minus the defunding language, sending the bill right back to the House.

Nothing will have changed, except that there will be only a day or two left before the government's financing runs out.

Without admitting it, the *Times* has perceived that the political landscape has in fact changed significantly. When a group of 40 members of the House of Representatives, taking seriously their oath to support and defend the Constitution against all enemies, both foreign and domestic, can shift the conversation to the point where left-wing liberals like Schumer and liberal mouthpieces such as the *Times* take to the airwaves and the digital universe to castigate such efforts, something momentous is happening.

No matter what happens whenever or however the ping-pong ball, bouncing from House to Senate and back again, finally comes to rest, the establishment Republican leadership has been shaken to the core, and establishment liberals have taken notice.

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