



Written by [Alex Newman](#) on October 3, 2013

Leaks Expose Bipartisan Plot to Save Congress From ObamaCare

As Republican leaders in Congress were publicly fuming about congressional exemptions from ObamaCare, leaked documents show that GOP House Speaker John Boehner's (shown front, center) office spent months working with top Democrats such as Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (shown front, right) to ensure that lawmakers and their staff would be spared from the [deeply unpopular](#) healthcare "reforms." Critics say the e-mails, [first given to Politico](#) as an [act of political retaliation](#), have once again exposed the political theater in Washington, D.C., for what it is — mostly a show put on for the public by two wings of the same establishment. Still, the real story is not Boehner, Reid, or even their hypocrisy, it is the bigger picture: A Congress that is deceptive, manipulative, and completely out of control.



The original so-called Affordable Care Act, known as ObamaCare, required that lawmakers and their staffs join the controversial healthcare exchanges created by the scheme, which was rammed through Congress in defiance of the public and the enumerated powers listed in the Constitution. If that part of the statute had remained in place, huge contributions from taxpayers to provide health insurance for members of Congress and their staffers — estimated at up to \$12,000 per year per family — would have ended. While Democrat lawmakers who passed ObamaCare insisted it was good enough for the American people, the plan was apparently not worthy of the exalted political class in Washington.

The e-mails from Boehner's office show that the speaker, who under heavy pressure has finally moved beyond rhetoric by making efforts to protect the American people from ObamaCare using [the power of the purse](#), spent months working with Democrat leadership to exempt lawmakers from the healthcare schemes. Indeed, this summer, the e-mails show, Boehner and Reid were plotting to organize a secret meeting with Obama to deal with the issue. Because it would almost certainly spark another wave of public outrage, Boehner's chief of staff even agreed to use a deceptive cover story to conceal the true purpose of the meeting: plotting to save Congress from ObamaCare.

"We can't let it get out there that this is for [Boehner] and [Reid] to ask the President to carve us out of the requirement of Obamacare," Boehner's chief of staff Mike Sommers told Reid's top aide, David Krone, in a July 17 e-mail obtained by Politico and other media outlets. "This is a little bit more difficult because it isn't a routine meeting, as [Nancy] Pelosi and [Mitch] McConnell won't be there. I am even ok if it is the President hauling us down to talk about the next steps on immigration." When Reid's staff expressed support for having the White House deceive the American people by pretending the meeting



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was about “immigration,” Sommers responded: “I really don’t care what is is [sic] about[,] it just can’t be about what we know it is about!” The White House was apparently happy to participate in the fraud against Americans, too, an e-mail from Krone shows.

While the meeting with Obama reportedly never happened, legislative gimmicks to save Congress from ObamaCare were drafted and circulated — though not introduced. Other ploys were also cooked up, such as grandfathering members of Congress into their current generous taxpayer-funded health plans. “When I was in the state legislature, we used to stick things in [bills] and no one would notice,” Boehner is alleged to have said by unnamed sources during a private meeting with Reid. However, according to Politico, the idea of trying to sneak a measure into a bill died after it became clear that a public scandal would almost certainly erupt.

Eventually, the Obama administration reportedly got involved in the issue under heavy pressure from Democrats in Congress, who apparently [found out what was in ObamaCare](#) and did not want to become victims of the scheme they foisted on the American people. So, finally, the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) lawlessly decreed via administrative “regulation” that subsidies for supposed public servants on Capitol Hill would continue. Everything would have worked out fine for lawmakers and their staffs — at least until recent developments sparked the politically motivated leaks and the ensuing uproar.

The latest revelations about the secret, bipartisan scheming to exempt Congress came after House Republicans [passed a budget](#) that would eliminate the controversial exemption. “Why don’t we make sure that every American is treated just like we are?” Boehner asked from the House floor on Monday, as lawmakers were working on stopping a partial government shutdown after Republicans retreated from [an earlier position](#). “Get rid of the exemption for Members of Congress.... It’s a matter of fairness for all Americans.” The original GOP plan, which only came about thanks to concerted efforts by conservatives, would have entirely defunded ObamaCare. When the Senate refused and Obama threatened to veto the budget and shut down some parts of the federal government, House GOP leaders instead tried to delay ObamaCare by a year and force Congress to participate in the scheme.

The e-mail leaks appear to be a half-baked attempt at making Speaker Boehner look like a hypocrite amid the ongoing battle to stop ObamaCare. House Republicans have so far resisted the bullying and outrageous threats by Senate Democrats and the Obama administration to immediately hand over the taxpayer funds needed to keep implementing the complete federal healthcare takeover. So, according to sources cited in [news reports](#), Reid and his minions decided to break “unwritten rules” by leaking the embarrassing e-mail exchanges.

“We always made it clear that the House would not pass any legislative ‘fix,’” Boehner spokesman Michael Steel was [quoted as responding](#), adding that the House speaker’s solution is and always has been to completely repeal ObamaCare. “Any emails from Mr. Sommers will reflect the Speaker’s position: he voted against ObamaCare, and he wants to repeal ObamaCare.... If the Senate Democrats and the White House want to make a ‘fix’ to the law, it would be their fix. The Speaker’s ‘fix’ is repeal. This is just a desperate act by Harry Reid’s staff to protect their own subsidy.”

In fairness, until the GOP took over the House, the blame for the myriad fiascos surrounding ObamaCare did rest mostly with Democrats — they rammed the legislation through Congress without having read it despite the wave of public outrage, and Obama signed it. Now, however, aside from the Supreme Court, responsibility for ObamaCare and all of its consequences will be on the GOP’s shoulders, too — at least if Republican lawmakers in the House refuse to exercise their constitutional



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authorities and obligations to defund the scheme in its entirety.

Politico, meanwhile, seems to have served as a willing mouthpiece in the apparent attack on Republicans. Citing sources, *Roll Call* [suggested](#) Reid's office leaked the e-mails to retaliate against Boehner. However, the real story has been largely overlooked in the frantic effort to demonize the GOP for doing what its constituents [demanded loud and clear](#). What the leaked documents show is that the same politicians fighting tooth and nail to force ObamaCare on the American people — Obama, Reid, House Democrats, and establishment senators on both sides of the aisle — were quietly scheming to make sure that the disastrous healthcare “reform” they foisted on America did not apply to them.

Of course, as *The New American's* Tom Eddlem [explained](#) recently, the GOP-controlled House of Representatives has the power to kill any and all government programs that Republicans so often rage against on the campaign trail. Because the Constitution gives the House primary control over taxing and spending, Republican lawmakers could simply defund ObamaCare, Planned Parenthood, the lawless EPA, the out-of-control Department of Education, the ATF, and all of the other unconstitutional schemes and agencies. With both parties scrambling to somehow get the full government open again before people realize most of it is worse than useless, however, the chances of meaningful reforms getting through the bipartisan Washington establishment still appear pretty slim.

Photo of John Boehner and Harry Reid: AP Images

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