



## **House Republicans give up on pro-life, conscience regulations in ObamaCare fight**

By Ben Johnson

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As President Obama and Senate Democrats stand their ground, House Republicans have dropped provisions barring the funding of abortion and delaying the HHS mandate for one year.

Early Sunday morning, the House approved the two measures as part of a bill to keep most federal programs funded and avoid a government shutdown. The bill included zero funding for the Affordable Care Act (ACA), conventionally known as ObamaCare.

As promised, Senate Democrats stripped the provisions out of the continuing resolution on a party line, 54-46 vote.

Regrouping, the House GOP abandoned the pro-life and religious liberty provisions from the bill.

Their new proposal instead delays ObamaCare's individual mandate for one year and eliminates subsidies for Congressional staffers' health insurance.

Family Research Council president Tony Perkins said he was "disappointed," because the new bill "ignores the threat to religious freedom that ObamaCare poses and does nothing to address the abortion subsidies that will take effect."

David Christensen, FRC's director of Congressional affairs, agreed this afternoon that the Republican proposal "doesn't fix the problem of abortion subsidies [and] doesn't fix the problem of" personal conscience violations.

Under the terms of the Affordable Care Act's HHS mandate, employers must provide all employees with insurance plans that include abortion-inducing drugs, sterilization, and contraception with no co-pay, or pay a fine of \$100 per employee per day.

The House had not voted on the new bill as of press time. However, the Senate is certain to reject it, as its Democratic leadership has said it will not negotiate with the House.

The rhetoric surrounding this issue has become so polarized that Senator Angus King of Maine, an independent who aligns with the Democrats, has said opponents of ObamaCare are “guilty of murder.”

On Monday afternoon President Obama remained defiant, telling National Public Radio, “I shouldn’t have to offer anything” to House Republicans in exchange for the support of his signature health care bill.

Instead, Obama said a partial government shutdown is “entirely preventable if the House chooses to do what the Senate has already done, and that’s the simple act of funding our government without making extraneous and controversial demands in the process.”

However, it is ObamaCare that is controversial and increasingly unpopular, with less than 40 percent of Americans approving of the measure.

The Republicans who control the House of Representatives hoped to tie a delay in its implementation to a must-pass bill to keep the government operating at its current levels.

The government runs out of money, and ObamaCare is set to go into effect for individuals, at midnight.

Congressman Darrell Issa, R-CA, suggested the House up the ante by forcing members of the Obama administration to sign up for the same benefits they are foisting on the American people. The Affordable Care Act exempts them from enrolling in what is acknowledged as inferior health care.

Michael F. Cannon, director of health policy studies at the Cato Institute, said that is the only provision that could assure the successful delay of the Obama health care bill. Without such a threat, he believes their actions are doomed to failure.

“It’s great that House Republicans are sending the Senate a bill delaying ObamaCare for a year,” he wrote. “Why don’t they want it to pass?”