

*The New*  
**REPUBLIC**

Published on *The New Republic* (<http://www.tnr.com>)

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## Revisiting Snowe's Lay-Down

Jonathan Chait January 19, 2010 | 11:00 am



A couple days ago, I **suggested** [1] that one option for Democrats to consider if they lose Massachusetts would be to go back to Olympia Snowe and find out if she wants to deal. Jonathan the Other's reporting **threw cold water** [2] on this, which made me **give up** [3] on that possibility.

Now Cato's Michael Cannon, apparently not content with this half-surrender, is **piling on** [4]:

Jonathan Chait **thinks** [5] that if Scott Brown becomes the 41st vote against President Obama's health plan, supporters could "Go back to

Olympia Snowe” to secure the necessary 60th vote. After all, “Her substantive demands have been met.”

Perhaps Chait forgets that Sen. Snowe (R-ME) — along with Sen. Susan Collins (R-ME), and every other Senate Republican — voted to declare an **individual mandate** [6] unconstitutional.

This actually makes me wonder even more about Snowe. After all, the Senate Finance bill she voted for **included** [7] an individual mandate. So, yes, she later voted to call that unconstitutional. But it's pretty clear that she's completely abandoned her previous stance on health care altogether and is now voting in lockstep with the party leadership. If Republicans proposed an amendment calling anybody who voted for the Senate Finance Bill a no-good socialist who should move back to France, she would support that, too.

That just raises the question of what exactly happened to Snowe. During summer and fall, she appeared very interested in a bill, and was actually **taking positions** [8] to the left of some Democrats. Shortly after her Senate Finance vote, she came under **intense pressure** [9] from the leadership, which obviously made her back off. The Senate bill is extremely close to the one she voted for, but absolutely nobody thinks or has thought for a while that there's any chance she'd vote yes. I'd still be curious to hear some inside account of how this went down.

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**Source URL:** <http://www.tnr.com/blog/jonathan-chait/revisiting-snowes-lay-down>