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## Inside the GOP's Plan to Undermine Obama

by John Hudson

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Now that Republicans have gained control of the House, they can push back against President Obama's agenda with more than just talk. While the Democrats maintain the Senate (and the president his veto authority), the GOP can still make a significant impact. Here's a look at the various issues reporters and conservatives say are on the table:



■ **Congressional Hearings** "Republicans should use their new investigatory powers to hold hearings and force officials like HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius to testify about the [health care] law," argues [Michael Tanner](#) at The New York Post. "For example, since the law passed we have learned that health care spending will go up, not down as promised, and that millions of Americans will not be able to keep the insurance they have today. What does Sebelius think of that?"

■ **Using the Power of the Purse** [Robert Pear](#) at The New York Times reports:

*Republican lawmakers said, for example, that they would propose limiting the money and personnel available to the [Internal Revenue Service](#), so the agency could not aggressively enforce provisions that require people to obtain [health insurance](#) and employers to help pay for it. Under the law, individuals and employers who flout the requirements will face tax penalties.*

*Moreover, Republican leaders said, they plan to use spending bills to block federal insurance regulations to which they object. And they will try to limit access to government-subsidized private health plans that include coverage of [abortion](#) — one of the most contentious issues in Congressional debate over the legislation.*

■ **Slowing the Afghanistan Withdrawal** [Phil Stewart](#) at Reuters reports:

*Gains by opposition Republicans in congressional elections last week have raised questions about possible push-back on President Barack Obama's contested policy of starting to withdraw from the nine-year-old war in mid-2011.*

*Obama's Democrats strongly support setting a date to start withdrawing from the unpopular conflict but Republicans,*

*who may now have a stronger say in policy, largely oppose it and may try to minimize any withdrawal...*

*Republicans in Congress, including Obama's 2008 presidential rival Senator John McCain, have pressed the president to back away from his July 2011 date to begin the withdrawals, saying it has backfired and fueled Taliban rhetoric about waiting out the West.*

- **Entitlements and Defense Spending** In an interview with ABC's Christiane Amanpour, Kentucky Senator-elect Rand Paul talked about raising the retirement age, implementing means testing on social security, bringing troops home and reducing America's military presence across the world.

- **Offering Alternative Ideas to ObamaCare** Conservative columnist [Michael Tanner](#) at The New York Post offers a few ideas:

*Republicans should also start laying out their own positive alternatives. It's not enough to simply repeal ObamaCare. Republicans will have to show that they have their own proposals for dealing with health care costs and the uninsured. They had a number of good ideas during the debate over reform, ranging from allowing the purchase of insurance across state lines to changing the tax treatment of individually owned insurance, but those ideas couldn't get much of a hearing while the president controlled the agenda. Now they can.*

- [Fighting the Health Care Bill](#)  
Robert Pear , The New York Times
- [What They Can Do](#)  
Michael Tanner , New York Post
- [The Afghan Drawdown](#)  
Phil Stewart , Reuters

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