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As House budget advances, pay differences with Senate emerge

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The House passed its version of Obamacare repeal-the American Health Care Act (AHCA)-in early May. Even after Senate Republicans announced they would be drafting their own health bill, though, it is unclear if the conference has the votes it needs to pass a bill.

Grassley stressed that the Senate is not working off the House bill, which he said "doesn't do anything for the 70,000 Iowans that probably in a month won't be able to go to the exchange and buy any insurance".

Trump "is the least policy-aware, policy-knowledgeable, policy-driven president that I can remember, maybe that we've ever had", said David Boaz, executive vice president of the Cato Institute, a libertarian think tank.

Trump, who suggested Tuesday that Democrats would have used the procedure if they held the majority, appeared to concede that Republicans can forgo bipartisanship when pushing forward the large-scale legislative priorities.

House Republicans advanced Wednesday their spending plan for North Carolina state government, which includes teacher and state employee pay increases that put the measure increasingly at odds with the Senate GOP's rival budget proposal.

McConnell, however, has repeatedly said he wouldn't touch the legislative filibuster. Still, Spicer said Tuesday that the administration has seen "progress" in crafting a tax reform plan with congressional leaders.

The Senate, however, has invoked the so-called "nuclear option" in the past to get certain nominations - most recently of note Supreme Court nominee Neil Gorsuch - through the Senate by a simple majority vote, but there is now no method for doing so with legislation.

A revised health-care bill narrowly passed the House, but Senate Republicans have signaled that they want to start from scratch.

The Senate *already* has approved a budget plan that cuts taxes more than the House seeks. Trump tweeted. In fact, the GOP can pass healthcare bills and tax reform with a 51-vote majority if Republicans can reach agreements among themselves. Spicer would not say on Tuesday where Trump wanted to add more money to health care.

Several top White House aides warned against discounting their chances of legislative success, saying key pieces could quickly fall into place after a concerted effort this summer.

"You mention healthcare and that's certainly front and center in the United States Senate, something that we will have to get resolved here in the next few weeks and I expect that we will", Cornyn said. "So the president's legislative agenda is in full swing".