



McConnell Faces A Challenge Passing Health Care In Senate

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(Granted, Trump wants to alter the nation's health care system in ways beyond what Congress can achieve through reconciliation, like regulations on selling insurance across state lines.) The assumption has been that tax reform would take the same shape next fiscal year, though it'd be contingent on Congress passing a new budget: a daunting task.

Mr. Trump's comments about his two top legislative priorities come as Republican leaders are *already* using a special procedure known as "reconciliation" – which requires only a simple majority of votes in the 100-member Senate – to consider health-care legislation. House Republicans also have signaled their tax reductions won't be as large as the Senate seeks. It got approved early this month by a narrow 217 to 213 vote after a series of amendments to appease both conservative and moderate Republicans.

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.

McConnell, however, has repeatedly said he wouldn't touch the legislative filibuster.

Debate on the measure began Thursday afternoon on the House floor and is expected to last several hours before the first of two required chamber votes is cast. A revenue surplus this year helped House GOP leaders boost savings, and fix and renovation funds in the plan.

"That's obviously one of the problems you have with any kind of tax reform, is everybody loves their tax preference", said Sen. Under this mechanism, the Senate can approve the health care bill with just 51 yeas—a reality untouched by the legislative filibuster or how the majority might change it.

The GOP-controlled Senate *already* passed a rival budget plan.

While the Republicans in the Senate have vowed to write their own "repeal and replace" healthcare bill, as opposed to taking up what their House colleagues sent over, Trump has made it clear he believes House version is a "great" proposal and given it his full endorsement. But several days before, he proposed cutting between \$800 billion and \$1.4 trillion in future spending on Medicaid, the health care program for low-income Americans. Spicer would not say on Tuesday where Trump wanted to add more money to health care.

Ernst stopped short of saying whether any legislation passed in the Senate would be accepted by the House.

"We'll get it done by the end of July at the latest".

