

Obama Calls On Congress To End Debate, Vote On Health Reform.

The House Democrats are being asked to cast a vote for the bill the Senate passed Christmas Eve. And, at least initially, they'll have to approve that Senate bill with no changes. President Obama said, "the debate is over, it's time to pass healthcare reform." Once the Senate bill is passed in the House, then the Senate and House can add a few good provisions to a fundamentally flawed bill - this is the wrong way to reform our health care system.

Does anyone really remember what is in the Senate Bill? Here's a short refresher.

Tax Increases

Insurance Mandates for both the Employer and Individual

-ban insurance companies from excluding people or raising their rates, because they have what's known as a pre-existing medical condition.

-it requires everyone to have insurance and if you can't prove you're covered, you'll pay a penalty.

Cuts in Medicare

Helping Hand

-If you're poor (defined by annual household earnings), you'll get health insurance for free through the Medicaid program.

- Middle-class people who have to buy their own policies would get government subsidies

- a new marketplace called an "exchange" to purchase your health insurance with outlines that will force millions of workers from their job-based plans.

- Another cost-cutting aspect of the bill is a new focus on paying doctors, hospitals and other health care professionals. In other words, the new payment system would be based on how health care professionals do their jobs, rather than just how many tests they order or exams they perform.

Political Deal-Making

- It still has the sweetheart deals in it. ... I mean, what's fair about taxpayers in Louisiana paying less than taxpayers in Tennessee? And what's fair about protecting seniors in Florida and not protecting seniors in California and Illinois and Wyoming?"

Here's where this process gets even more complicated. Those so-called sweetheart deals are expected to be cancelled in a second bill. That so-called fix bill will carry the compromises now being made between the Senate and the House. That bill is also likely to alter the way the health care program is paid for.

But that second bill is still being drafted, and House Democrats are skittish about its ultimate prospects. Don't expect a House vote on the Senate bill until they get some assurances about what that second bill will do — and that the Senate can actually pass it.

We are encouraging that all Chamber Members contact their House Representative. Click [here](#) to send a letter already drafted and in which you can make changes.