



BENDING THE RULES

Realizing Current Rules Don't Work In Their Favor, Dems Writing New Rules To Pass Government-Run Health Care

JUST FIVE YEARS AGO, CONGRESSIONAL DEMS CRUSADED AGAINST RULE CHANGES

In Debate Over Changing Senate Rules, Then-Sen. Barack Obama (D-IL) Said Actions “Would Change The Character Of The Senate Forever... And That’s Just Not What The Founders Intended.” (Jake Tapper, “Obama Quotes On Senate Rules In 2005 Given New Scrutiny,” [ABC News’s “Political Punch” Blog](#), 2/24/10)

Then-Sen. Joe Biden (D-DE) On Changing Senate Rules: “The Nuclear Option Is Ultimately An Example Of The Arrogance Of Power. It Is A Fundamental Power Grab...” (Sen. Joe Biden, Floor Remarks, 5/23/05)

- **Biden: “I Pray God When The Democrats Take Back Control We Don’t Make The Kind Of Naked Power Grab You Are Doing.”** (Sen. Joe Biden, Floor Remarks, 5/23/05)

Sen. Harry Reid (D-NV) On Changing Senate Rules: “The Right To Extended Debate Is Never More Important Than When One Party Controls Congress And The White House. In These Cases A Filibuster Serves As A Check On Power And Preserves Our Limited Government.” (Sen. Harry Reid, Floor Remarks, 5/18/05)

Sen. Chuck Schumer (D-NY): “They Want Their Way Every Single Time, And They Will Change The Rules, Break The Rules ... So That They Will Get Their Way.” (Sen. Chuck Schumer, Floor Remarks, 5/18/05)

Sen. Max Baucus (D-MT) On Changing Senate Rules: “This Is The Way Democracy Ends: Not With A Bomb, But With A Gavel.” (Sen. Max Baucus, Floor Remarks, 5/19/05)

BUT NOW DEMS WRITING NEW RULES TO PASS GOVERNMENT-RUN HEALTH CARE, WILLING TO DO “WHATEVER IT TAKES”

White House Says Obama Will Do “Whatever It Takes” To Push Bill Through. “White House spokesman Robert Gibbs said Obama will push hard. ‘Whatever it takes to get healthcare done,’ he said. Obama is due to travel to Philadelphia and St. Louis next week to make his case for the overhaul.” (Patricia Zengerle, “Obama Seeks To Push Healthcare To Final Vote,” [Reuters](#), 3/3/10)

- **House Speaker Nancy Pelosi: “I Think We Would Do Almost Anything To Pass A Healthcare Bill.”** (Mike Soraghan, “Pelosi: ‘We Would Do Almost Anything To Pass A Healthcare Bill,’” [The Hill](#), 12/10/09)

House Dems Now Considering Writing New Rules To Pass Government Takeover Of Health Care “Without An Actual Vote On The Senate’s Legislation.” “Party leaders have discussed the possibility of using the House Rules Committee to avoid an actual vote on the Senate’s bill ... They would do this by writing what’s called a ‘self-executing rule,’ meaning the Senate bill would be attached to a package of fixes being negotiated between the two chambers -- without an actual vote on the Senate’s legislation ... the Senate bill would be automatically attached to the reconciliation package, if the House passes reconciliation.” (Patrick O’Connor and Carrie Budoff Brown, “A Dizzying Array Of Options To Pass Health Care,” [Politico’s “Live Pulse” Blog](#), 3/9/10)

- **All In An Attempt To Avoid Voting For Backroom Deals Like The “Cornhusker Kickback” And The “Louisiana Purchase.”** “This would allow them to deal with the Senate bill without forcing their members to go on record in

support of unpopular items, like the now-infamous Cornhusker Kickback or the so-called Louisiana Purchase, that could be used against them on the campaign trail in the fall.” (Patrick O’Connor and Carrie Budoff Brown, “A Dizzying Array Of Options To Pass Health Care,” *Politico’s “Live Pulse”* Blog, 3/9/10)

And Senate Dems Considering “Undoing Filibuster Rules.” “Sen. Chuck Schumer (D-NY) said ... that he is going to hold Rules Committee hearings on filibuster reform to dramatically change the process. At the gathering ... Schumer announced he will examine the legal way to ‘undo, modify or lessen the filibuster rule ... This is something we are very serious about,’ Schumer said. He said he thinks that it can be done. Schumer said the hearings would examine filibuster history, constitutional arguments and proposals for reform put forth by Sen. Tom Harkin and Sen. Tom Udall.” (Christina Bellantoni, “Schumer To Hold Hearings On Undoing Filibuster Rules,” *Talking Points Memo*, 3/10/10)

BECAUSE USING THE EXISTING RULES AS A PARLIAMENTARY TRICK WON’T BE ENOUGH

Dems “Committed To Reconciliation” Even Though “It’s Going To Cause Political Problems.” “They are coming out of the summit guns-a-blazing and they’re committed to reconciliation,’ said one Democratic insider ... Reid and White House chief of staff Rahm Emanuel are cautioning that ‘it’s going to be a heavier lift than a lot of people expect it to be ... It’s going to cause political problems.’” (Chris Frates, “Obama, Reid, Pelosi ‘Committed To Reconciliation’ -- Tanden Leaving Administration -- Medicaid Enrollment Hits Record 46.8M -- W.H. Could Push For Public Option,” *Politico’s “Live Pulse” Blog*, 2/19/10)

Assistant Majority Leader Sen. Dick Durbin (D-IL): “If We Go The Reconciliation Route, We Will Be Testing Some Reconciliation Rules And Provisions That Have Never Been Tested Before.” (Manu Raju, “Republicans Cast Doubts On Senate Parliamentarian,” *Politico*, 3/3/10)