

Republicans say time for Senate to move on from health care

WASHINGTON (AP) — Leading Senate Republicans said Monday it was time to move from health care to other issues, saying they saw no fresh pathway to the votes needed to reverse last week's collapse of their effort to repeal and rewrite the Obama health care law.

"For now, until we have a path forward that gets us 50 votes in the Senate, we've got other things to do and we're going to start turning to those," No. 3 Senate GOP leader John Thune told reporters.

"It's time to move onto something else, come back to health care when we've had more time to get beyond the moment we're in," said Sen. Roy Blunt of Missouri, another member of the GOP leadership. "See if we can't put some wins on the board" on bills revamping the tax system and building public works projects, he said.

The lawmakers spoke after last week's stunning crash of the GOP's drive to tear down President Barack Obama's 2010 health care law and replace it with their vision of more limited federal programs.

While the leaders stopped short of saying they were surrendering on an issue that's guided the party for seven years, their remarks underscored that Republicans have hit a wall when it comes to resolving internal battles over what their stance should be.

No. 2 Senate GOP leader John Cornyn of Texas signaled pique at White House budget chief Mick Mulvaney, who pushed senators in weekend TV appearances to keep voting on health care until they succeed.

Mulvaney has "got a big job, he ought to do that job and let us do our jobs," Cornyn said. He also said of the former House member, "I don't think he's got much experience in the Senate, as I recall."

Despite Mulvaney's prodding and weekend tweets by President Donald Trump insisting senators revisit the issue, even the White House's focus turned Monday to a new horizon: revamping the tax code.

White House legislative director Marc Short set an October goal for House passage of a tax overhaul that the Senate could approve the following month.

Plans envision Trump barnstorming the country to rally support for the tax drive, buttressed by conservative activists and business groups heaping pressure on Congress to act.

On health care last week, Republican defections led to the Senate decisively rejecting one proposal to simply erase much of Obama's statute. A second amendment was defeated that would have scrapped it and substituted relaxed coverage rules for insurers, less generous tax subsidies for consumers and Medicaid cuts.

Republican, Democratic and even bipartisan plans for reshaping parts of the Obama health care law are proliferating in Congress. They have iffy prospects at best.

Republicans can push something through the Senate with 50 votes because Vice President Mike Pence can cast a tie-breaking vote.

But GOP prospects for reaching 50 seemed to worsen after McCain returned to Arizona for brain cancer treatments.

His absence for the next two weeks, before the Senate begins its recess, probably denies leaders their best chance of turning that vote around.

Rather than resuming its health care debate, the Senate began considering a judicial nomination Monday.

In the House, 43 Democratic and Republican moderates proposed a plan that includes continuing federal payments that help insurers contain expenses for lower-earning customers. It would also limit Obama's requirement that employers offer coverage to workers to companies with at least 500 workers, not just 50.

Los Angeles reaches deal with Olympic leaders for 2028 Games

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Los Angeles reached an agreement Monday with international Olympic leaders that will open the way for the city to host the 2028 Summer Games, while ceding the 2024 Games to rival Paris, officials announced Monday.

The arrangement would make LA a three-time Olympic city, after hosting the 1932 and 1984 Games.

With the agreement, the city is taking "a major step toward bringing the Games back to our city for the first time in a generation," Mayor Eric Garcetti said in a statement.

He called it a "historic day for Los Angeles, for

the United States" and the Olympic movement.

The agreement follows a vote earlier this month by the International Olympic Committee to seek a deal to award the 2024 and 2028 Games. Paris is the only city left to host the 2024 Games.

The Los Angeles City Council and U.S. Olympic Committee board of directors will consider the agreement for approval in August. If approved, the IOC, LA and Paris may enter a three-part agreement, clearing the way for the IOC to simultaneously award the 2024 Games to Paris, and the 2028 Games to LA. The IOC vote is scheduled for September, in Lima, Peru.

In embracing what amounted to the second-place prize and an 11-year wait, LA will receive a financial sweetener.

Under the terms of the deal, the IOC will advance funds to the Los Angeles organizing committee to recognize the extended planning period and to increase youth sports programs leading up to the Games. The IOC contribution could exceed \$2 billion, according to LA officials. That figure takes into account the estimated value of existing sponsor agreements that would be renewed, as well as potential new marketing deals.

LA and Paris were the

last two bids remaining after a tumultuous process that exposed the unwillingness of cities to bear the financial burden of hosting an event that has become synonymous with cost overruns.

LA was not even the first American entrant in the contest. Boston withdrew two years ago as public support for its bid collapsed over concerns about use of taxpayer cash. The U.S. bid switched from the east to the West Coast as LA entered the race.

But the same apprehensions that spooked politicians and the local population in Boston soon became evident in Europe where three cities pulled out.

Uncomfortably for IOC President Thomas Bach, whose much-vaunted Agenda 2020 reforms were designed to make hosting more streamlined and less costly after the lavish 2014 Sochi Games, the first withdrawal came from his homeland of Germany.

The lack of political unity for a bid in Hamburg was mirrored in Rome and Budapest as support for bids waned among local authorities and the population.

It was clear they did not want to be saddled with skyrocketing bills for hosting the Olympics without reaping many of the economic benefits anticipated.



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