

July 18, 2017

Repeal & Replace Efforts Fail Again

Less than five days after the Senate released the second version of its Better Care Reconciliation Act (BCRA), GOP efforts to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act (ACA) have failed once again.

If the BCRA had any chance of passing, Republicans could lose only two votes. With this difficult number to maintain, there was doubt that the BCRA would have the necessary votes to pass, since two senators, Rand Paul (R-KY) and Susan Collins (R-ME), publicly stated they would vote against BCRA-2 from its onset. In addition, rumors surfaced that at least eight, if not ten, other Republican senators had serious concerns about this latest bill and would vote against it as well. Dwindling support for the bill, followed by the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) postponing the release of its analysis of the bill and the announcement to delay a vote this week while Senator John McCain (R-AZ) recuperated after surgery, was most certainly a sign the end may be near.

The proverbial nail in the coffin of the BCRA came late last night when two additional senators, Jerry Moran (R-KS) and Mike Lee (R-UT), announced their opposition to BCRA-2. These senators' public denunciation of the bill spurred Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell to publish the following statement on Twitter, "***Regretfully, it is now apparent that the effort to repeal and immediately replace the failure of Obamacare will not be successful.***"

Reports today swirled around a bill that would completely repeal Obamacare now, with the possibility of a replacement plan sometime in the future. This type of proposal has been very unpopular with both parties, and would likely need 60 votes in the Senate to pass. Already, three Republican senators have announced they will not vote for a procedural step to take up the bill, should it move forward.

As far as we know, McConnell is still planning to hold the procedural vote on the repeal bill, perhaps before the Senate adjourns for a recess August 11th, even though it doesn't appear he's got the votes needed for such a bill to pass. From there, it's unclear what may happen next.

We will continue to monitor all ACA repeal and replace efforts and will keep you updated as new information is released.

Should you have any questions or concerns please contact a local member of your AssuredPartners Benefits Team.

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