



Pelosi suggests two-track strategy for health reform

[Politico](#) (1/28, Harris) reports that on Wednesday, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) "floated the idea of a two-track plan for healthcare reform - with Congress pursuing easier-to-pass incremental changes now and comprehensive reform later." In an interview with Politico she said, "We believe that it's possible to have comprehensive healthcare reform as we go forward, but at the same time, it can be on another track where some things can just be passed outside of that legislation, and we'll be doing both."

Pelosi asserts House will pass "comprehensive healthcare reform." [CongressDaily](#) (1/28, Edney, subscription required) reports that Pelosi spoke briefly regarding comments from House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer (D-MD), who on Tuesday suggested that "not passing a bill is an option." Pelosi said, "We want to pass comprehensive healthcare reform. ... We'll pass it in a way that we can."

"Asked if Congress might abandon a healthcare initiative beset with political and policy problems," the [AP](#) (1/28) reports Pelosi said, "I don't see that as a possibility. We will have something."

Lawmakers weigh in on potential use of reconciliation. The [Los Angeles Times](#) (1/28, Levey) does not mention the two-track strategy, but reports that Pelosi "said Wednesday that the House should pass the Senate's version and then use a process known as 'budget reconciliation' to make the changes some lawmakers are demanding." Calling the strategy "politically fraught," the Times also points out that "House and Senate leaders have not agreed on what later changes to make to the Senate bill."

[Roll Call](#) (1/28, Bendery, subscription required) reports that House Majority Whip James Clyburn (D-SC) suggested that "bipartisanship is gone and Democrats should use the procedural device known as reconciliation to push healthcare reform legislation through the Senate on a simple majority." On MSNBC's "The Ed Show," Rep. Clyburn "called on Democrats to get behind a bill 'the simple majority will vote for and let's go for it.'"

[The Hill](#) 's (1/27, O'Brien, subscription required) "Blog Briefing Room" reports that Sen. Ben Nelson (D-NE) said "that he could support passing

current health legislation using budget reconciliation as long as he believes the underlying bill is good." He said, "I will vote for it regardless of whether it takes 50 votes to pass or 60 votes to pass. My position doesn't change just because the House or Senate decides to change the process."

[CQ HealthBeat](#) (1/28, Reichard, subscription required), meanwhile, reports that Sen. Joe Lieberman (I-CT) "said Wednesday that he's undecided about how he'd vote on a package of House modifications" on the healthcare reform package if it were moved using reconciliation.

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