

Ezra Klein *Washington Post, Nation, New Republic*; Jonathan Cohn, *Sick, the New Republic*; Susan Denzer, *Health Affairs*: Sat. 9 am

Where are we today?

K: good, can't move backwards. Bad, Dems don't know how to move forward. All logic and moral decency say we must sign the Senate Bill and then fix it through reconciliation

S: Dems are moving through grief process, still in shock and denial, paralyzed at a time when we must move swiftly.

2 track approach, Reconciliation; have to appear to be working with Republicans, even though on HC there is no chance of common ground, not even common pebbles.

J: He's yo-yoing. Thurs someone told him dead, same night, ALIVE. Cautiously optimistic. More work going on behind the scenes. We have to agree on what reconciliation actually means and convince members to sign on, a long process. Pres and House Dems and Sen. Dems all have to "take that Leap"; the Pres. Has to tell them to do it; PUSH!

Public opinion numbers have to come up for HC reform to move. Kaiser Family Fund in tracking poll of Mass. Voters found that almost all the pieces of the bills had high favorability but they hated the whole bill. We have to change hearts and minds.

We also need to make sure our House members know we have their backs if they vote for it. One good idea is to give them awards at the local level. This is all about elections.

What are the political consequences for the Dems in the House? Blue Dogs? (tightest margin districts.)

E: the will be painted as spineless either way... so get a bill and get it signed. Success breeds success. We need a VICTORY! /we need to rally people who don't vote, who will benefit the most. Need to marshal turnout.

S: Pres. Needs to quit calling it "Health Insurance reform". Need to convince people who want universal coverage and fiscal . If they don't do it, Everybody dies! If it fails we are worse off then before. If it fails, real people will die. Congress is not so much afraid of the bill as of the reconciliation process. In the real world, Bush proved that if you just get it done (MMA), no one remembers the process. MMA barely squeaked through; the process was ugly, and now no one cares. Repubs would have passed this bill. Can you really create policy in the US? The only way to do it is to throw out all the rules. Rules are not more important then saving millions of lives The Am. People hate Am. Politics. Republicans get that. They are right to think that moving fast is critical. Passing this bill is the biggest problem to the Blue Dogs. If they make the choice not to go with the Pres, the left and Dems will turn on them. If they follow him, the Right will throw in another candidate who will out-right them anyway. We need to pass, have photo ops of signing, hiring nurses etc. events, job training, closing the Donut Hole.

With Blue dogs, the issue is the deficit, or really, the perception of deficit.

Time is not on our side. Rahm Emanuel had an interview in the NY Times implying that jobs and bank regulation were more important than Healthcare reform.

Reconciliation needs: talk to parliamentarian, sequencing, do other things before rec.

2 ways HC can die:

Rahm will say committed, just don't do it now.

or rescission, pare it down. Either way, it will grow old and die, not to return for 20 years. There is expiration for the reconciliation process. Susan thinks Rahm 's statement were to take HC out of the headlines and allow the process to move behind the scenes.

After Mass. Vote, the White House was very divided.

We need to react badly to Rahm et al. They think the pres. is still determined to get HC bill passed.

Need to shore up public support, and m makes sure it doesn't get repealed, like the Catastrophic coverage legislation

Michael D. Rosko

<http://jhppl.dukejournals.org/cgi/content/abstract/19/4/753>

Congress intended the Medicare Catastrophic Coverage Act (MCCA) of 1988 to reduce the risk for illness-related catastrophic financial losses in the elderly. The act was short-lived, facing repeal just one year after passage. Many elderly persons were convinced that the costs of the program outweighed the benefits. However nursing home payment provisions of the MCCA may have affected out-of-pocket expenses paid by the elderly for long-term care more than consumers realized at the time of repeal. A transmittal memorandum, issued by the Health Care Financing Administration independent of Congressional action, enhanced consumers' ability to qualify for Medicare nursing home benefits. We investigated the effects of the Medicare policy change on nursing home payer mix and out-of-pocket expenses in 489 Pennsylvania nursing homes. We found that substantial shifts in payer mix from self-pay to Medicare payment sources occurred, reducing out-of-pocket expenses. Unfortunately the debate over the MCCA's repeal did not include discussion of the improved nursing home benefit structure. These findings, and the fate of the MCCA legislation, reinforce the importance of comprehensive information and clear communication in promoting health care reform.

There needs to be long term change to Sen. Rules, but can't happen now because of media and polarization.

Process is problem no. 1.

Universal coding for insurance

Website for transparency

Closing donut hole.

31-37 million people will be covered ; Me3dcaid subsidies will be improved. Need our help to enroll people. We need to focus on the costs of not passing the legislation.

60 million now without insurance.

“If you can't be with the one you love, love the one you're with.”