

Durbin to Senate Republicans: Keep your word and draft health care repeal bill in light of day

June 13 2017 11:25 AM



WASHINGTON – In a speech on the Senate floor, U.S. Senator Dick Durbin (D-IL) today denounced Senate Republicans for drafting their partisan health care repeal bill in secret, and for refusing any meaningful bipartisan input on the bill or to hold any hearings on their legislation before it comes to the floor for a vote. Durbin's speech comes before President Trump's meeting with the 13 Republican Senators who have been drafting the repeal bill behind closed doors.

“What is the proposal of the Republicans in the Senate when it comes to the future of our health care system in America? I don’t know. And the reason I don’t know is because it’s being done in secret. There’s no committee hearings. There’s no opportunity to offer an amendment” said Durbin. “In fact, we haven’t even seen the measure we may have to vote on in two weeks. The Congressional Budget Office, which is supposed to analyze it, hasn’t published any analysis of the Senate Republican plan, and yet they are moving forward at a break-neck pace to have us vote on it up or down before we leave for the Fourth of July recess. It’s a frightening prospect.”

Durbin then explained how the process for passing the Affordable Care Act was done in a bipartisan and open process in 2009 and 2010, unlike the Senate Republican plan to repeal health care.

“Do you know that we adopted 160 Republican amendments to the Affordable Care Act? It was a bipartisan process on the amendments. How many amendments will we be able to offer to the Republican Senate proposal that’s going to come before us in two weeks? The answer is we don’t know because we have never seen the Republican proposal. It’s been done in secret,” said Durbin. “We don’t know what the ultimate product will look like, but I can tell you this: whatever the Republican Senators come up with, it’s going to have a dramatic impact on each and every single American, every one of us in our communities back home.”

In [remarks](#) on the Senate floor on January 8, 2014, Republican Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) stated that if Republicans were fortunate enough to gain the majority in the Senate that major legislation should go through committee.

“There’s a lot of empty talk around here about the corrosive influence of partisanship. Well, if you really want to do something about it, you should support a more robust committee process. That’s the best way to end the permanent sort of shirts against skins contest the Senate’s become. Bills should go through committee. And if Republicans are fortunate enough, Republicans are fortunate enough, to gain the majority next year, that will be done,” said McConnell (Floor Remarks, 1/8/14).