Congress Passes Reconciliation Bill Creating Pathway for ACA Repeal

Congress took their first formal step toward repealing the Affordable Care Act (ACA), as both chambers passed a budget resolution (S. Con. Res. 3) that formally instructs four congressional committees to begin drafting reconciliation legislation that would repeal the 2010 health care law. The House voted 227-198 to approve the budget resolution that puts Republicans on the path to repeal the ACA, following a Senate vote which narrowly passed by a count of 51-48.

The budget resolution will allow Republicans to utilize a powerful procedural tool known as reconciliation to allow the GOP to dismantle the health law with simple majorities in the House and Senate.

Republican governors, Democrats and some industry stakeholders, had urged lawmakers not to take steps to repeal the law without an immediate replacement.

House Speaker Paul Ryan (R-WI) and President Donald Trump maintain a repeal and replacement of the law will happen simultaneously or concurrently.

Members of the House Freedom Caucus voted against the budget resolution. House Freedom Caucus members had also raised concerns that policies in the budget resolution would add to the national debt.

Democrats said they would be willing to work with Republicans to improve the ACA, but urged Republicans not to repeal the law.

But ultimately enough Republicans voted in support of the resolution.