

Congressman Mike Pence appeared on *FOX News*' ["On the Record" with Greta Van Susteren](#) to discuss health care reform, particularly the grassroots effort to get lawmakers to pledge that they will actually read the legislation before voting on it. Video and transcript are available below:

TRANSCRIPT:

GRETA VAN SUSTEREN: Do you want your Senators and Members of Congress guessing for you, voting blindly and simply hoping for the best? Well, to be more specific, is it too much to ask that Members of Congress, who you sent to represent you, actually read the health care bill before they sign it, before they vote for it?

Well, apparently, for some, yes. Listen to Congressman John Conyers.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

REP. JOHN CONYERS: I love these Members that get up and say 'Read the bill!' Well, what good is reading the bill if it's a thousand pages and you don't have two days and two lawyers to find out what it means after you've read the bill?

(END VIDEO CLIP)

VAN SUSTEREN: Congressman Conyers declined our request to go "On the Record." However, 93 Members of Congress have, with some prodding from you, now signed a pledge to read the health care bill.

One of them is Congressman Mike Pence. He joins us live. Congressman, when you hear Congressman Conyers say that you need two days and two lawyers -- two days -- we can find

two days. I don't know where we're going to get these two lawyers. A lot of lawyers in Congress, though. I'm a lawyer. But anyway -- I guess I'm a little bit -- you know, look, you guys got to read it if you're going to -- if you're going to vote on this, you got to read it. This is not renaming a park. This is a very important issue to the American people.

REP. MIKE PENCE: Well, I think that's exactly right. And you know, we're talking about a fundamental transformation of about 20 percent of the American economy, but -- and in fact, I brought a copy of the bill for you tonight. I know you're not here with me, Greta, but I brought a copy of the bill. It's 1,017 pages.

What we've found so far, there -- it includes 33 entitlement programs, creates or expands or extends, 53 additional offices, bureaus, commissions, programs, bureaucracies the bill creates. It uses the word -- you'll like this from an attorney's perspective. It uses the word "shall" 1,683 times, representing new duties for bureaucrats and mandates. That's up from an increase of 306 mandates in the discussion draft.

You bet every Member of Congress who votes for this bill ought to read it, read it thoroughly, and understand that what we're looking at here amounts to nothing more than a government takeover of our health care economy, paid for with nearly a trillion dollars in new taxes on individuals and small businesses. And it must be opposed.

VAN SUSTEREN: All right, it's interesting; we've actually got some of the numbers. In the United States Senate, of course, there are 100 members, 7 have signed the pledge to actually read what they're voting for the American people, which, of course, is 7 percent. I can do that math. In the House, 435 members in the House, only 86 have signed to actually read it, and so that's a total of 93 House and Senate who've agreed to read it, none of which is a Democrat. And so no Democrats agreeing to read this. And of course, we just heard a Democratic Congressman saying he doesn't have -- it would take two days and two lawyers.

And you know, frankly, you know, I don't know if this is a good bill or a bad bill. Leave those thousand pages for me, though. I'd like to see them. I don't know if it's good or bad, but it's deceitful to vote for something when you have no clue what it really means to the American people, when it's so important. This isn't naming a park.

PENCE: Well, that's right; it's not naming a park, Greta. But to the point, and you know, you just heard Congressman Conyers make reference to 'you have two days'. Well, you know, that's actually more time than we had to review the cap-and-trade bill, which you'll remember was amended at 3:00a.m. in the morning the day they brought that national energy tax to the floor of the Congress. The same thing -- the stimulus bill was rushed through the Congress.

You know, there's some talk on Capitol Hill that we may have a reprieve. There's rumors that the Democrat majority may actually delay consideration of this bill until after the August recess. If that happens, it'll be because all House Republicans and a handful of courageous Democrats have managed to achieve that reprieve on behalf of American taxpayers.

But the American people deserve time to read this. Every member of Congress ought to sign that "Let Freedom Ring" pledge that they'll commit to read this bill before they sign it, given the magnitude of what this would mean to our health care economy and to every American.

VAN SUSTEREN: I don't know how every other American feels, but I feel a little bit had if someone doesn't actually want to read something so important and is voting for me. You know, maybe -- maybe others feel differently.

I'm curious what's sort of being said behind the scenes, in the halls. You know, like, is it, like, 'Oh, my God, the American people are learning we don't read this stuff?' I mean, what are your colleagues saying behind the scenes?

PENCE: Well, there's that old joke, Republicans are worried that voters aren't going to understand what we're trying to do, Democrats are worried that voters are going to understand what they're trying to do. And look, I don't know, you know what the reason for the rush is right now. I do know that, given the fact...

VAN SUSTEREN: I'm in favor a rush if everybody actually stays and does their homework first. I don't mind the rush.

PENCE: Well, sure...

VAN SUSTEREN: You know, you got to do the homework! You got to read the thing!

PENCE: Look, we can do the work. We can do it quickly. We ought to do health care reform in this country. You just heard Governor Pawlenty describe a number of free market-based Republican ideas that would do a significant amount to reduce the cost of health insurance to small businesses and family farms and would reduce the cost of health care. You know, but why the Democrats are insisting on pile-driving through a 1,017-page bill that actually -- you know, Republicans are doing their best to read through it and keep that pledge, Greta, and you'll see more Republicans sign that pledge. But -- but we don't even have the full bill yet. They're negotiating it as we speak.

VAN SUSTEREN: Well, leave -- leave what you have -- I got to go, Congressman, but do leave that right there on the set there for me, and I'll get it when I get back to Washington, Congressman. Thank you. Thank you, Congressman.

PENCE: You bet.