

Congressman Pence [appeared on NBC 's "Meet The Press"](#) today to discuss the current political climate, the lack of bipartisanship in Washington and the GOP's electoral prospects in this year's midterm elections. Excerpts from his appearance are below:

On Bipartisanship:

PENCE: Well, I think what Evan Bayh was talking about was a Democratic Congress. I agree with him very strongly that under Democratic leadership in the House and the Senate, Congress has been failing the American people.

The American people are tired of the borrowing, the spending, the bailouts and the takeovers. But they're also tired of the 'take it or leave it' approach that Democrats have taken. It's unthinkable that a massive health care bill, a massive energy bill were actually brought to the floor and the minority party was allowed one amendment on those bills.

I think people are tired of the backroom deals, I think they're tired of the leadership the Democrats brought to Capitol Hill.

I think that's why, as Tim Pawlenty said, I honestly believe the American people are going to take back the American Congress and put Republicans back in control this fall.

PENCE: David, that's right though, we do need more seriousness in Washington, D.C. The economy is struggling, we have challenges abroad, this is a very serious time in the life of this nation. But the reality is - and I think Peggy reflected on this - what's passed for 'bipartisanship' in this Democratic Congress and under this Administration is giving Republicans an opportunity to vote on big-government, liberal Democrat bills. That's not bipartisanship.

The President yesterday called for us to 'look for common ground,' he's challenging Republicans to present a bill at this so-called summit that's going to take place on Thursday - all the while Democrats are in some backroom, as we speak, cooking up another health care bill

they will reveal next week.

DAVID GREGORY: But before you get to health care, when you say "big-government" bill, the stimulus bill had \$288 billion worth of tax cuts. That was for you guys!

PENCE: As I told the President, the stimulus bill that he brought to the floor did not include one single Republican proposal that had been offered on the floor. We've been completely ignored, we've been completely excluded from the process and the stimulus bill has failed.

On Health Care Summit:

PENCE: E.J.'s talking about kind of an idyllic approach to this summit, and quite frankly - let me be clear on this - and I'll say this with Chris in the room, House Republicans would welcome a good faith effort to start over on health care reform. We've had our bill online for months. The Democrats are going to put their latest bill online tomorrow.

If we were talking about really starting over with a clean piece of paper, scrapping bills that passed the House and the Senate and also renouncing the abuse of the legislative process known as reconciliation, Republicans are ready to work. But what we can't help but feel like here is that the Democrats spell summit "s-e-t-u-p," and all this is going to be is some media event used as a preamble to shove through Obamacare 2.0 and we're not going to have any of it.

On The Tea Party Movement:

GREGORY: Is the Tea Party movement, as an anti-government movement, is it part of the Republican Party?

PENCE: Well, I don't know - E.J. did that anti-government thing - look, the President said this week something about 'you've got these people who are against government'

GREGORY: Well, they're not pro-government, that's fair, right?

PENCE: The American people aren't against government, they're against big government. They're tired of borrowing, spending, and bailouts and takeovers.

GREGORY: But my question is, are they a part of the Republican Party?

PENCE: The people you characterize as the tea party movement are a group of - I was there at 9/12 on the National Mall, I've spoken to Tea Party rallies and town hall meetings - David, I'm telling you these are decent, God-fearing, hard-working, everyday Americans who just know we can't pile this mountain range of debt on our children and grandchildren.

GREGORY: Do you think they are a part of the Republican Party?

PENCE: Well, I think that all depends on the Republican Party. I think that if we hold the banner of limited government, fiscal responsibility and personal responsibility high, if we offer positive solutions and if we provide the loyal opposition to the big-government schemes on energy and health care and budgets and deficits, you bet, they'll know what to do this fall and Republicans will win back the majority of House in 2010.