

Congressman Mike Pence appeared on *FOX News* to respond to President Obama's latest speech on health care reform:

## EXCERPTS:

Reaction to the president's remarks:

**Congressman Mike Pence:** "Well, I think it has to be disappointing to millions of Americans. It seems like the president was at the health care summit last week but he had the sound down. And it seems like this president has been ignoring the overwhelming sentiment of a clear majority of the American people who have rejected a government takeover of healthcare.

"Anyone who tuned in today might have thought that the president would have scaled back. We heard talk about a smaller bill, we heard talk about maybe the Democrats taking a more incremental approach. But what we heard was the president today essentially doubling down on a government takeover of health care and in effect saying that this massive expansion of government, a trillion dollar expansion of government, would 'give Americans more control.' Well, I think the American people reject this approach because they know what they're advancing is simply going to give the government more control over decisions that ought to be made between patients and doctors and families.

"I really do believe this hasn't changed anything. It's more of the same government takeover, with a few Republican ideas salted in. Of course the most troubling aspect here is the President of the United States openly advocating that the leadership of his party abuse the historic role of the Senate, the historic rules of the Senate, to overturn the expressed will of the majority of the American people. That's got to be frustrating to millions, and it's certainly frustrating to those of us who will be in this fight on Capitol Hill."

The use of reconciliation:

**Host Megyn Kelly:** "He's [the president] making a reference to when the Democrats were in the minority and the Republicans used reconciliation to push through certain bills."

**Congressman Mike Pence:** "It's just not supportable from an historical standpoint. Even Robert Byrd has said openly that to use the reconciliation budget process in the Senate, in this way, would really be an abuse of the traditional roll of the Senate. But you know, I do think the big question coming out of this speech is: 'What's the hurry?' The president says we have to bring it to a close; it's time to make a decision. The issue of health care and health insurance, and the long-term cost of health care, is a profound issue that has enormous consequences not only to the federal budget, but to the most precious decisions of every American and every American family."

**Host Megyn Kelly:** "He says the time for talk is over. He spoke to that in the remarks, saying that you guys on Capitol Hill have been debating this, he said, for decades and that the time for talk is over."

**Congressman Mike Pence:** "He says this isn't about politics. But why do we have to get it done in two weeks? I mean, if it's not about politics, if they are not trying to force something through with enough time, as one member of the Senate said yesterday, to hope they can recover politically by election day, then what is the hurry?"

"This is too important to rush. A majority of the American people want us to scrap the bill and start over. But what you heard the President of the United States say today is that because he can do it, he will do it. He's going to drive a government takeover of health care through the Congress, and I just have to tell you, I think the America people, and Republicans in the Congress, have got another think coming for them. I think we are going to turn this thing back. I think the American people are going to be heard from, but it's not going to be people clamoring for more government, more taxes, more mandates. It's going to be Americans who are clamoring for freedom and for free market solutions."

Does Speaker Pelosi have the votes:

**Congressman Mike Pence:** "She's [Speaker Pelosi] a very good vote counter, but you know, the person they always leave out of the discussion here in Washington, D.C., Megyn, is the

American people. The president said in his speech that politics intruded. Well, you know what? At the town halls in August all over this country, at the 9/12 March, it wasn't politics that intruded - the American people intruded.

"The American people want legislation on health care that will lower the cost of health insurance, give people the chance to purchase health insurance across state lines, do medical malpractice reform, deal with pre-existing conditions. They don't want a government takeover of health care. What the president is saying today, because he thinks he's able to do it politically, is he's going to override not the minority in Congress, but the express will of the majority of the American people to advance it. And I think he has another think coming."

The impact of using reconciliation:

**Congressman Mike Pence:** "I think that was one of the most amazing things about the speech, Megyn, the president referred to the fact they got 60 votes, as though Massachusetts never happened. They don't have 60 votes now. The American people in the one election that they had a chance to be heard on the Senate in a dramatic way, the American people sent Senator Scott Brown to Washington, D.C. to be Senator number 41. It's as though the president is simply ignoring the will of the American people. My answer is, he was right the first time.

"When you look at the history of major social legislation, whether it was the enactment of Social Security, whether it was the enactment of Medicare, those bills, although controversial and hotly debated, at the end of the day they passed with broad bipartisan support. And they did so largely because the United States Senate is that cooling saucer, under the Constitution of the United States, that requires that legislation achieve some measure of consensus and therefore, broad support among the American people. The very idea that the president is going to force through a trillion dollar government takeover of health care, on a pure party line vote, I think is going to be deeply offensive and deeply disappointing to millions of Americans."