

Congressman Pence Discusses Health Care Reform with Monica Novotny on MSNBC:

Monica: Congressman Mike Pence, Republican of Indiana joins us now. He's also the Republican Conference Chair. Congressman, great to have you. At an Indianapolis tea party you said we've got to kill the bill, but Clyburn who we just spoke to a few moments ago, says he'll get the votes and they can get this done by this weekend. Is it too late to kill it?

Rep. Pence: That's a little bit outside of my jurisdiction. We're in the minority, we're kind of on the sidewalk looking through the department store window. I think the way the American people are rising up from my home state of Indiana and all across the country, who are rising up against the government takeover of health care, against these mandates, against these job-killing tax increases, and against the bill that would provide coverage for elective abortion for the first time in history. I think we have an opportunity to stop this bill. It's not just about killing the bill, Monica, as I also said at that rally. We ought to go to work immediately after they stop this bill on the kind of incremental step by step reforms that will focus on lowering cost of insurance rather than growing the size of government.

Monica: I know you say you want sensible reform. You talk about Americans uprising in your own home state, but we've got this new NBC/Wall Street Journal poll that shows that 46% of people say they want to pass Obama's health care plan. Is there any part of this plan, then, that you can support?

Rep. Pence: The Wall Street Journal/NBC poll I saw in the paper this morning said 48% of Americans said it was a bad idea, so I must not have read all the details of that particular poll. Just from being at town hall meetings across Eastern Indiana this weekend, the American people just know we can do better. They know we don't have to launch a massive new government-run exchange, a massive government takeover of health care and mandate that every American purchase health insurance whether they want it or need it or not. I think they know we can do better, but we have to stop the bill to get to those kind of bipartisan solutions.

Monica: If it's passed, will you challenge legislation?

Rep. Pence: Well let me say I'll duck that question, Monica.

Monica: And you've been saying I'm ducking that question.

Rep. Pence: Yeah, I'm ducking that question. This is probably the most significant piece of legislation to come before Congress in my lifetime. It has the capacity to transform one-sixth of the American economy. I think that this is far less than across the finish line, and I think those of us, Republicans and Democrats on Capitol Hill and across this country who know we can do better, need to stay focused on stopping this bill. I believe we can do that. I believe we can stop the bill but it's going to take the American people rising up and demanding not just that the bill be scrapped, but we immediately start over on sensible solutions. Which I'll commit to you and your viewers, Monica, that the day after this bill goes down, we're going to reach across the aisle to Democrats who brought this bill down along with Republicans and try and build a bipartisan solution that will be acceptable to the American people.

Monica: Alright, we'll bring you back then. If that's the case, we'll bring you back, sir. Congressman Mike Pence, thank you.

Rep. Pence: Thank you, Monica.