

House votes to repeal part of Obama health care law

March 22 2012

The Republican-led House of Representatives voted Thursday to repeal a key measure of US President Barack Obama's health care reform, a symbolic move on the historic law's second anniversary.

The bill, adopted by lawmakers 223-181, including seven Democrats, would scrap a 15-member panel established to control costs for elderly beneficiaries of the government-run [Medicare program](#).

The Independent Payment Advisory Board (IPAB) is one of several elements of the Obama-backed [Affordable Care Act](#) -- nicknamed "Obamacare" by critics -- that have encountered vehement opposition from Republicans.

"The president and I do agree on this: the current [Medicare reimbursement](#) system is broken," House Majority Leader Eric Cantor told the House. "But we do not need a board of unelected bureaucrats to control costs."

The bill is sure to die in the Senate, which is currently controlled by Democrats who supported Obama's [health care reform](#) plan.

However, the bill revives a battle over the landmark legislation less than eight months before the presidential election.

Supporters of the legislative proposal say IPAB will be crucial in keeping costs down once the entire law comes into effect two years from

now, acting as a backstop on unlimited entitlement growth.

Critics say the panel's efforts to control costs will ultimately be used to deny care to seniors.

The top Democrat in the House, [Nancy Pelosi](#), called Thursday's legislation "a cynical political ploy -- and I know that America's seniors will not be fooled by it."

Shortly after Republicans took control of the House in early 2011, they voted to repeal the entire bill, but that effort failed in the Senate.

Thursday's House vote comes just days before a review by the Supreme Court, which will determine whether the bill's measures, including a mandate that everyone have or purchase health insurance, are constitutional.

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