

US health plan advances, showdown vote next week in Congress

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The future of US health care faces a moment of truth next week when lawmakers are expected to vote on the Republican plan to replace Obamacare, after the measure cleared a key hurdle Thursday in Congress.

The contentious plan, opposed by all Democrats and some fiercely critical Republicans, narrowly survived a [vote](#) in the House of Representatives Budget Committee.

Two conservative Republicans on the panel opposed the measure but it was not enough to block the plan, which advanced on a 19-17 vote.

House Speaker Paul Ryan, who along with President Donald Trump is a champion of the plan that rolls back several existing health insurance provisions, has said he hopes the bill will come up for a full floor vote next week.

"We're very confident that we're moving the ball in the right direction," Ryan said.

But the top Republican in Congress acknowledged criticism of the plan from within his own party has made it likely that the bill will undergo some form of revision so it can get across the finish line in the House and Senate.

"We're working at bridging those gaps to make improvements to the

bill," Ryan said.

If 22 of the House's 237 Republicans vote no, and Democrats are united in opposition, the [health care bill](#) will fail.

Staunch conservatives sharply criticize the measure because its tax credits for Americans to buy insurance are too similar to the subsidies provided under Barack Obama's [health care law](#).

Moderate Republicans worry that the replacement could leave even more families struggling, a prospect highlighted by this week's damning projection by the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office that 24 million people could lose insurance within a decade under the plan.

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