



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on May 7, 2011

Republicans Take Medicare Changes Off the Table

Rep. Dave Camp (R-Mich.), the Chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, was much more direct: "I'm not interested in talking about whether the House is going to pass a bill that the Senate shows no interest in." The authors emphasized that Republicans had met some resistance (some deliberately organized by Democrats) in presenting Ryan's plan to their constituents during the recent break. They gleefully noted that although the Medicare modifications were "never likely to be adopted as part of any deal on the debt limit ... the decision to pull back the proposal was a tacit acknowledgement that the politics of entitlement reform ... could cost the [Republicans] dearly at the polls. "



Speaker of the House John Boehner (R-Ohio) was candid about Rep. Camp's position not to push forward with the Medicare modifications, noting that Camp recognized the "political realities that we face." And just what are those realities? The simple fact that Democrats who control the Senate (and the White House) aren't likely to treat any discussion of possible changes to one of their favorite welfare-state programs with regard or respect. When pressed on the matter, Rep. Ryan himself said:

At the end of the day, I think [the election of 2012] is going to make the decision. The people are ahead of the political class.

Translation: House members are waiting for reinforcements as a result of the 2012 elections. And so what are the chances? What are the chances, if any, of Republicans taking control of the Senate in 2012?

Actually, according to [Harry Enten](#), they're excellent. Commenting at *Rasmussen Reports*, Enten asserts that not only do "the Democrats face an uphill battle to re-capture the House ... the main question is whether Republicans can pick up the necessary four seats to take control of the Senate. A model I have created suggests the GOP will not only gain the majority, but in fact control 54 seats in the next Senate." Calling it a National Swing Model, Enten notes that in 2012 Democrats will be defending 23 Senate seats, while the Republicans will only be defending 10. Says Enten, "Even if the Democrats were able to win 58% of the Senate elections in 2012, they would still lose four seats and control of the Senate." Using his model, Democrats are expected to defend successfully only 16 of the seats in question. This swing of seven seats from Democrat to Republican would [give control of the Senate](#) to the Republicans: 54-46.

At a [recent speech](#) in upstate New York, *John Birch Society* President John McManus reminded his audience that the society's strategy for winning the freedom fight has, for 50 years, been focused on the House of Representatives. Under the Constitution, all spending bills originate in the House, and Representatives are elected to two year terms, rather than six as in the Senate, making them more



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responsive to pressure from an educated electorate. Said McManus, “We take our country back through the House of Representatives. ”

If Harry Enten is right, the Democrats will be unable to wrest control of the House from the Republicans, and are instead likely to lose control of the Senate as well. If that turns out to be the case, although the battle for the country is in the House, a little help from the Senate certainly wouldn’t hurt.

Of course, even if the Republicans capture control of both houses of Congress in 2012, that does not necessarily mean that so that Congress will suddenly pass legislation scaling back the size and scope of government. Even though [Rep. Paul Ryan's budget proposal](#) would save trillions of dollars over the next decade compared to the first budget proposal Obama submitted this year, it still forecasts hundreds of billions of dollars in deficit spending every year. The bottom line is that if Americans really want to reduce spending in the absolute sense — not just reduce projected future spending increases — they need to evaluate candidates based on how closely their public positions and records square with the Constitution, even when the candidate calls himself a conservative Republican and/or claims to support the Constitution.



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