

GOP Senators Adopt Tax, Spending Outline Over Medicaid Worries

By Ken Tran and Jack Fitzpatrick | April 5, 2025 3:23AM ET | Bloomberg

- Senate adopts resolution setting stage for tax, spending bill
- Collins, Paul join Democrats in opposing framework

Senate Republicans adopted a new budget plan to pave the way for a sweeping tax bill early Saturday morning. But lawmakers are far from the finish line to enact President Donald Trump's agenda, as House Republicans raise concerns ahead of a vote next week.

The Senate advanced a compromise budget resolution by a mostly party-line vote of 51-48 after senators toiled for hours over dozens of amendment votes from Democrats on tariffs, Medicaid, the federal debt, and protections for federal employees, among others.

Sens. Susan Collins (R-Maine) and Rand Paul (R-Ky.) joined Democrats in opposing the measure, highlighting concerns from moderates and hard-line conservatives that could pose a threat to a final GOP tax bill.



(Photo by Anna MoneyMaker/Getty Images)

Sen. Susan Collins (R-Maine) opposed the plan.

House Republicans will take up the budget framework next week, aiming to adopt it and allow lawmakers to focus on crafting the full tax and spending bill. But dissent from conservatives and moderate Republicans alike risks throwing party leaders off track.

Any changes the House makes to the resolution would require another vote in the Senate and another marathon voting session, even before Republicans can start genuinely negotiating a bill.

The framework sets the stage for a tax measure that could add more than \$5 trillion to the debt over a decade. It also calls for a \$5 trillion increase to the debt limit, along with \$150 billion in new defense spending and \$175 billion in new immigration and border spending.

Democrats sought to hold Senate Republicans' feet to the fire late Friday evening and early Saturday morning, forcing amendment votes accusing Republicans of catering to the ultra wealthy at the expense of the middle class.

Three Republicans joined all Democrats present in backing an amendment that would have removed the framework's instructions requiring the House Energy and Commerce Committee to find at least \$880 billion in cost savings. The measure failed 49-50, despite support from Sens. Josh Hawley (R-Mo.), Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska), and Susan Collins (R-Maine). Democrats have warned the Energy and Commerce requirement would require billions in cuts to Medicaid. The amendment's failure may help satisfy debt hawks in the House by keeping in instructions to require spending cuts. But the close vote signals unease among moderates over possible cuts to Medicaid.

Members adopted an amendment with broader language by Sen. Dan Sullivan (R-Alaska), backing possible measures for "strengthening and improving Medicaid."

Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.), introduced an amendment to rescind Trump's sweeping tariffs if the costs of groceries, medications and other household goods increase.

Despite growing unease among GOP lawmakers about the scope and economic impact of the president's trade war, the amendment failed by a party-line vote of 46-53.



Photographer: Jonathan Ernst/Reuters/Bloomberg

Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.) at a press conference Thursday, where he spoke about Democrats' legislative agenda.

An amendment from Sen. Jon Ossoff (D-Ga.) to reverse cuts made by DOGE to the Social Security Administration failed by a vote of 49-50, but it peeled off support from Collins, Murkowski, and Sullivan.

Another amendment from Sen. John Hickenlooper (D-Colo.), sought to prevent the proceeds of any sales of public lands from reducing the federal deficit. The amendment was rejected by a vote of 48-51, but received support from Montana Republican Sens. Steve Daines and Tim Sheehy.

Budget has Long Road Ahead in House

House Republican leadership plans to take up the new budget in the House sometime next week but will need near unanimity to adopt it and finally unlock the reconciliation process. But dissent from deficit hawks signals they're facing an uphill battle.

The House Budget Committee took an apparent slight at the Senate plan, [posting on X](#) Friday evening right before the Senate started voting that "cutting taxes without cutting spending doesn't reduce taxes."

“If Republicans don’t have the political will to stop Washington’s unbridled spending, we will bankrupt our country and destroy our children’s future,” the panel said in the post.

The ultraconservative House Freedom Caucus shared the post on X and called it “spot on.”

Deficit hawks have balked at the Senate’s floor for spending cuts, which come in at \$4 billion, a far cry compared to the House’s instructions that give its committees a total target of \$2 trillion of spending cuts.

Senate Republicans have vowed to be more fiscally conservative when it comes to crafting the actual legislation, but the House’s conservative hardliners are demanding a commitment baked in writing into the budget plan.