

House Republicans want another megabill. One GOP senator says it could be ‘damaging.’

The White House has yet to articulate its vision for a second, or third, reconciliation package.

BY:

MIA MCCARTHY

JORDAIN CARNEY

CASSANDRA DUMAY

| 08/10/2025 01:00 PM EDT - POLITICO



Sen. Mike Rounds (R-S.D.) is seen during a series of votes on a budget reconciliation bill for President Trump's legislative agenda at the U.S. Capitol June 30, 2025. (Francis Chung/POLITICO via AP Images)AP

House Republicans are pushing for a second megabill. The Senate GOP's not so sure. After a grueling ordeal to get President Donald Trump's "big, beautiful bill" signed into law last month, Speaker Mike Johnson and other leaders are already talking about crafting at least one more domestic policy package that can pass along party lines in the Senate.

A White House official, granted anonymity to share details about private conversations, said another filibuster-skirting reconciliation bill is under discussion. The conservative Republican Study Committee has launched a "Reconciliation 2.0" working group and is hosting staff briefings throughout the summer recess to begin generating recommendations for follow-up legislation.

And Senate Finance Committee Chair Mike Crapo (R-Idaho) said he's open to considering as many as 200 tax proposals from his members that were ultimately not included in the first megabill. But most senators have questions about what could go into another reconciliation package — and they're casting doubts on whether it's even politically possible to do this all over again.

“You have to have a reason to do it,” said Sen. Mike Rounds (R-S.D.). “It’s not easy to do, so you have to have a purpose for doing it in the first place.”

That unifying purpose for Republicans the first time around was a desire to deliver Trump a major legislative victory early in his second term and prevent a tax hike that they feared would weaken the economy. Republican leaders’ decision to throw in a debt limit extension through 2026 as Treasury warned the nation would soon exceed its borrowing authority added a do-or-die incentive.

“Without the pressure, I don’t see how you get it done,” said one Republican senator, granted anonymity to speak freely, about prospects for passing a second reconciliation bill without an existential impetus for action. “I don’t think I see what the pressure is here.”

At the same time, despite the White House’s enthusiasm for another reconciliation bill, administration officials have not yet told lawmakers what policies they want considered, according to three people speaking on condition of anonymity.

Sens. Roger Wicker (R-Miss.) and Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.) — chairs of the committees on Armed Services and Budget, respectively — also said before leaving for recess they have not received guidance from the White House. Sen. Ted Cruz (R-Texas), chair of the Senate Commerce Committee, said he still hadn’t heard from the administration about its broader set of legislative priorities heading into the fall. At this point, the loudest reconciliation push in the Senate is coming from deficit hawks like Sen. Ron Johnson, who wants to use another bill to cut spending further than what conservatives were able to achieve in the first package.

“Leadership is telling us we’ll do one or two more reconciliations in this Congress,” the Wisconsin Republican told reporters earlier this summer. “So the clock’s ticking” While Senate Majority Leader John Thune has left the door open to doing a second reconciliation bill, he hasn’t provided a specific timeline for doing so.

One of the three people waiting to hear from Trump said the push for another party-line package is coming not as much from the administration as from the House. There, Budget Chair Jodey Arrington (R-Texas) has said lawmakers should try to rework policies cut from the first reconciliation bill to comply with Senate rules. But there’s skepticism in the Senate that the House will be able to successfully relitigate those proposals.

“My sense is that there’s more enthusiasm in the House than in the Senate, and that makes sense,” said Sen. Jerry Moran (R-Kan.). “They can do things with 51 votes anyway, most of what we have to do requires 60. And that means that senators, if you have a desire to actually legislate, need to find ways to legislate — and reconciliation is damaging to that relationship.”

But House Republicans are also navigating their own slim margins and ideological divides. Conservatives and centrists clashed over cuts to Medicaid and clean energy tax credits in the “big, beautiful bill,” and lawmakers could have a diminished appetite for further battles over hot-button issues, especially heading into an election year.

Some House GOP aides were alarmed earlier this week when a hard-line think tank, the Economic Policy Innovation Center, pitched an extended moratorium on Medicaid funding for large abortion providers in a Republican Study Committee staff briefing.

RSC leadership has stressed its megabill working group is designed at this point to generate ideas and put down markers, but EPIC’s recommendation could be a harbinger of other disputes to come. Meanwhile, Republicans are already struggling to sell voters on the first megabill back in their home states and districts, where town halls and other constituent events in the early weeks of recess have [so far been rocky](#).

One House Republican, granted anonymity to speak candidly, said there would be some “hesitancy” to dive back into reconciliation.

“We did so much in the first,” the member said. “It's going to be harder to do a second one.”