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## Paging Harry Reid: Where Is The Bill?

*Three days after breakthrough announcement, there is still no Senate bill to read*

WASHINGTON, DC – Taxpayers who remember Senate Democrat Leader Harry Reid’s (D-Nev.) [statement](#): “No longer can we allow special interests and lawmakers to conspire behind closed doors. We need transparency,” may find themselves scratching their heads these days. On Monday afternoon, October 26, 2009 Sen. Reid announced that he successfully merged together the healthcare bills produced by the Senate Finance and HELP committees.

Three days later, other members of the Senate and taxpayers have yet to get a glimpse at the bill, which Sen. Reid sent off to the Congressional Budget Office in order to obtain an official cost estimate. Given that the just-released House bill is 1,990 pages long, it can reasonably be assumed that the Senate version Sen. Reid has negotiated behind closed doors will be well over the 1,000 page mark.

**“This Congressional leadership and the Administration have been claiming they’re all about transparency and involving Americans in the healthcare reform process. So where is the Senate healthcare bill?”** asks Grover Norquist, president of Americans for Tax Reform. **“It is unconscionable that three days after Harry Reid announces a breakthrough in his secret negotiations nobody has actually had an opportunity to look at the bill, which no doubt will be more than 1,000 pages long. Is that how you involve the American people?”**

These developments follow on the heels of a less-than-transparent legislative process. President Obama had campaigned on holding healthcare negotiations with C-SPAN cameras in the room, but that never materialized. Meanwhile, the Senate Finance committee rejected an amendment requiring the online posting of the committee bill along with the final CBO score before a committee vote.

**“Taxpayers are becoming increasingly frustrated with this healthcare ‘reform’ process - for good reasons,”** continues Norquist. **“Especially in light of all the lofty promises the President and Congressional leaders made, this wheeling and dealing in the dark is an insult to Americans, all of whom will be impacted in some shape or form by this overhaul package. Sen. Reid, it is time to stop the smoke and mirrors and let Americans see what you have cooked up for them rather than forcing them to swallow blindly.”**

Americans for Tax Reform is a non-partisan coalition of taxpayers and taxpayer groups who oppose all tax increases. The Center for Fiscal Accountability, a project of Americans for Tax Reform, seeks to shed a light on government expenditures, and to promote transparency, accountability, and restraint in government finance. For more information or to arrange an interview please contact John Kartch at (202) 785-0266 or by email at [jkartch@atr.org](mailto:jkartch@atr.org).

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