

This president, who came to office as a herald of change and transparency, has spent the last 14 months polarizing our nation to an extent I have never seen before. But even for this White House, its resolve to pass health care reform on an unwilling public at any cost represents a new low.

Last week's declaration by the president that it's time for an up or down vote on health care was a thinly veiled signal to force the passage of the controversial legislation through a parliamentary tactic known as "reconciliation."

This process would allow passage of a Senate health care bill by a plural majority of 51 votes, thus avoiding a filibuster.

Downplaying the negative impact of a forced vote on his unpopular health care plan, the president said during the recent health care summit that "the American people aren't always all that interested in procedures inside the Senate. I do think they want a vote on how we're going to move this forward."

A Gallup poll released that same day showed the public, by a 52 to 39 percent margin, opposing the Democrats in the Senate using a reconciliation procedure to avoid a possible Republican filibuster and pass a health care bill.

It's ironic that while the president has no problem with reconciliation now, both he and Vice President Biden have each decried its use in the past.

Mr. Obama observed in a 2007 newspaper interview, "...You've got to break out of what I call the sort of fifty plus one pattern of presidential politics. Maybe you eke out a victory of fifty plus one. Then you can't govern. You know, you get Air Force One, there are a lot of nice perks, but you can't deliver on healthcare. We are not going to pass universal health care with a fifty plus one strategy."

Mr. Biden said on the Senate floor in 2005, "I say to my friends on the Republican side you may own the field right now, but you won't own it forever, and I pray God when the Democrats take back control we don't make the kind of power grab you are doing."

Apparently when it comes to using reconciliation to impact one sixth of the economy, the president and vice president don't have a problem being inconsistent with their previously held views.

I, like my Republican colleagues and many conservative Democrats in the U.S. House, am opposed to expanding Washington's reach over our health care system. We reject the president's plan to limit health care access and choice of doctors, as well as inflicting deep cuts in Medicare. Rest assured, I will vote against the president's health care takeover.

However, I would welcome a good faith effort by our president and his leadership in Congress to start over on health care reform. I support the Republican health care reform proposal, which includes medical liability reform, allows people to buy insurance plans across state lines, and

improves access to Health Savings Accounts.

The non-partisan Congressional Budget Office has estimated that our plan would reduce private insurance premiums by up to 10 percent and lower the federal budget deficit by \$68 billion over a decade. We don't have to take over the health care system to accomplish these goals.

New Website Launched:

If you have recently visited my website, then you know it is sporting a new look.

The previous site, which was launched in 1997, has been replaced with modern layout with easier to navigate menus. I've retained some of the same information as the previous site and have added a video section where you can view my floor speeches.

In addition to being able to email my office from the new site, you can also request information about U.S. Capitol tours, visiting Washington, DC, as well asking for assistance in dealing with federal agencies.

My weekly columns, press releases and radio show archives are also hosted on the new site.

My new website is located at the same web address as the old, <http://bonner.house.gov> . However, you may have to re-enter the address in your favorites if you have the old site bookmarked. I encourage you to visit our new web site.

New Newsletter Delivered:

Last week my Winter/Spring 2010 congressional newsletter was distributed in local newspapers throughout the First Congressional District.

The eight page tabloid size newsletter is full of information about my recent activities in Congress on your behalf as well as detailed reports on my views and votes on many key bills.

If you did not get my latest newsletter, you may request a copy be mailed to you by contacting any of my three congressional offices, or dialing the toll free number below. Alternatively, you may download a copy of my newsletter from my website at the web address below.

My staff and I work for you. If we can ever be of service, do not hesitate to call my office toll free at 1-800-288-8721.