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GOP split on tackling another mega-bill



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House Budget Chairman Jodey Arrington speaks at a news conference following passage of the "big, beautiful bill" at the U.S. Capitol on May 22, 2025. Photo: Anna Moneymaker/Getty Images

DORAL, Fla. — For House Speaker [Mike Johnson](#), reconciliation 2.0 may not be as "big," but it will be "[just as beautiful](#)."

Why it matters: Some House Republicans are all in on trying to muscle through one more major bill this year. A sizable bloc, however, is deeply skeptical they have the time, or the unity, to get it done.

- "I'd love to do a second reconciliation bill, but I'd also love to be Brad Pitt," said House Ways and Means Chairman Jason Smith (R-Mo.), who's been casting doubt for weeks about the viability of another mega-bill getting through.
- "It won't be as big, but it can be just as beautiful," Johnson (R-La.) said in response.

Driving the news: House Republicans are [gathered in Doral, Florida](#), for their annual retreat, mapping out their legislative agenda for the rest of the year.

- Johnson described a large whiteboard with a Venn diagram representing the conference's seven primary caucuses. His goal:

find "where all those circles join in the middle."

- In an afternoon meeting with other GOP leaders, Johnson spoke about working with members to narrow down the list, according to a source in the room.
- "In concept, we're there," House Budget Chair Jodey Arrington (R-Texas) told reporters after a policy listening session Tuesday morning.

The intrigue: On Tuesday night, President Trump signaled he wants nothing else from Congress this year (besides the SAVE America Act). There was no mention of [reconciliation 2.0](#).

- But Trump is adamant about signing the [SAVE America Act](#) into law, with some senators suggesting that the budget reconciliation process, which only requires 50 votes, is the best way to pass it out of the Senate.

While that option was discussed in the Senate GOP's weekly lunch Tuesday, leaders have expressed skepticism that it can survive procedural challenges.

- Instead, they are likely to hold a procedural vote next week on the bill that would require a 60-vote threshold to proceed. It's expected to fail.



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- "I still think we ought to do reconciliation." Sen John Kennedy (R-La.) told reporters.

Zoom in: In the House, the clearest area of consensus is targeting fraud in social programs such as Medicaid and SNAP, multiple members told Axios.

- But lawmakers realistically have only the spring to act before campaign season overtakes the legislative agenda.

Zoom out: Asked if Congress is done for the rest of the year, Johnson gave a flat "no."

- "Our number one objective for the remainder of the year, top priority is to continue to work with President Trump and the administration to reduce the cost of living for our American families," the speaker said.
- But optimism wasn't high among the lawmakers who would have to move it through the House.
- "If you look at history, it is extremely rare for two partisan reconciliation bills to ever pass in the same Congress, extremely rare," Smith told reporters Tuesday.

