

Essay on political conflict analysis

Countries, United States



The Obama healthcare reforms will probably go down as the most controversial political conflict in his era (Sanger 1). The American healthcare bill had never been reformed since the 1960s, and Obama goes down as one of the few presidents who reformed the bill. However, the healthcare reforms were passed with a lot of political controversy and conflict that saw Democrats and Republicans disagree, enthusiastically. The following study aims at analyzing the Obama led healthcare reforms conflict, illustrating how showing a larger understanding of American politics can be applied to help clarify what happened in the policy conflict. Also, the study focuses on Jacobs and Theda's "Health Care Reform and American Politics: What Everyone Needs to know" readings, and Lawrence, Peterson and Stimson's "Electoral Mandates in American Politics" readings with support from 2 other news articles to analyze how the political conflict in the controversial healthcare bill occurred with reference to American politics.

Political conflict in Obama healthcare reforms occurred as a result of American politics between the Republicans and Democrats based on the analysis of readings used in this paper. Obama's healthcare reforms began in 2007 when he was a presidential candidate promising Americans access to low cost insurance. It was evident at that time that, the healthcare system suffered serious challenges, as the number of uninsured increased steadily to over 40 million individuals. There was much debate on making insurance available for all Americans and making it affordable. The reform was met with a lot of controversy where the Republicans and Democrats seemed to disagree on almost everything about the reform.

The passage of the Obama healthcare bill seemed impossible, but inevitable.

Political scientists base political outcomes on structural factors such as the campaign traits that have long been used in American politics. The American political system is shaped in way that presidents pursue to accomplish their key campaign agenda, which they usually do as witnessed in the healthcare bill (Jacobs and Theda 34). Presidential candidates in America and even internationally not only seek to win, but to also achieve. Such examples of President Reagan and taxes, Bush and education, or Clinton and welfare, prove that presidents uphold some of their campaign pledges and are mostly fruitful at accomplishing it. Obama did not just come up with a healthcare plan and leave it to the senate to decide, he sacrificed his governance to an extent of harming his political party and political welfare (Sanger 1).

The passing of the bill through a 60 majority vote rather than through the consent of the governed illustrates how presidents are determined to achieve their key agendas (Sanger 1). There is a tendency of major reforms always failing to be passed. In the American political system, both by evolution and design, packed with rejection points. Any proposal must pass and clear each step before it can be enacted (Lawrence, Peterson and Stimson 713). It must pass and clear pertinent committees in the Senate and the House; it must be approved by both chambers independently; both chambers are required to eventually settle their differences and approve on an indistinguishable bill, which must then be approved by the president (Lawrence et al. 717). Opponents on restructuring are required to vote and win in any of these steps in order to succeed. Jacobs and Theda state that the senate is conceivably the most difficult step to overcome (56). Senate laws give considerable power to those in minority positions, and have the

ability to block lawmaking by threatening to filibuster proceedings (Lawrence et al. 714). 60 Senators are therefore needed to vote to proceed, as it is the only way to overcome the threat (Jacobs and Theda 56). Filibusters were very rare until the era of Obama, which occurred very frequently to an extent of the President expecting all his proposals to be filibustered. The same case applied to the healthcare bill, where 40 Senate Republicans were expected to vote against, which they did, resulting in the situation where the bill would only advance if all Independent and Democratic Senators voted in its support (Tumulty 1).

Obama can also be blamed for the political conflict arising from the healthcare reforms. He had no mandate to improve healthcare. Presidents have limited mandate in lawmaking and the public is mostly unaware of their needs to numerous reasons. American politics of elections is based on the idea of refusing the past and embracing the future without a clear idea of their needs (Jacobs and Theda 77). Most of Obama supporters had no idea what changes were to come in his famous campaign slogan “change we can believe in”.

Political conflict in the healthcare bill occurred mostly in the process it underwent. The bill had passed most stages because of the 60 vote Senate vote logic. Furthermore, this was more after Scott Brown won a senatorial seat in Massachusetts held by a Democrat; meaning democrats could not break any opposition threats in the Senate stage (Jacobs and Theda 99). This occurrence left Obama with three options; he took his plan to the public and started promoting it aggressively in public. For most people it seemed that was his plan, but it was all due to political conflict and differences between

the House and Senate (Republicans and Democrats) (Tumulty 1). Obama then considered scaling the bill to at least acquire something before it was framed as bad policy or politics. He finally resorted to his risky, tricky, and brilliant option of letting the House approve the Senate version of bill verbatim (Jacobs and Theda 120). The Senate promised to pass an individual and current House bill that would refine the Senate reform to meet House distresses. It was finally passed with a 56-43 Senate vote margin, with all Republicans voting against it (Tumulty 1).

In conclusion, it is evident that there is reason for political conflict in the passing of the Obama healthcare bill. This conflict is based on partisan fighting that is inevitable in the American political system. Any governing administration in American politics makes all the efforts necessary to achieve their key agenda that will keep them in power. By analyzing the readings on Obama healthcare and American politics, it is easily understood that political conflict is inevitable and will continue to occur as long as there are Republicans and Democrats. American politics have been shaped on individual interests and doing what the public believes is good. Many Americans do not understand what such healthcare bills mean in detail, only the fact that insurance will be for all and at a low cost. The readings have illustrated how American politics shapes political conflict in the passing of the Obama healthcare bill.

Works Cited

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