Ryan calls pulling the GOP health care bill a 'setback,' as Dems celebrate the decision

Posted on Friday, Mar 24, 2017

Speaker Paul Ryan chalked up his House GOP health care plan's defeat to "the growing pains of governing," saying his caucus was still becoming used to being the majority party in Washington, D.C.

"This is a setback, no two ways about it," the Janesville Republican told reporters this afternoon, adding that Republicans "just didn't quite get consensus today," although he said they "came very close."

Meanwhile, Dems celebrated the decision, which they say marks an early legislative defeat for Republicans.

The GOP leadership's call this afternoon to pull the health care bill comes after the House delayed a vote originally slotted for yesterday evening. That announcement came as national media reports showed the GOP leadership struggling to pull together the needed votes.

Ryan said this afternoon that Republicans would be moving on with the rest of their agenda, including securing the border, tax reform, infrastructure and rebuilding the military, and he didn't expect there to be any major hangups in those priorities.

"This issue [health care] had a big difference of opinion" on "how we should replace it," Ryan said.

Dem U.S. Reps. Mark Pocan and Ron Kind gave credit for the bill's pulling to constituents who phoned their representatives with concerns about the plan.

"This is a victory for everyone who contacted Congressional offices to voice their opposition to this bill," said Pocan, D-Town of Vermont. "These calls paid off and showed President Trump and Speaker Ryan that you cannot ram a bill through Congress while ignoring the concerns of the American people."

In a tweet, Kind, D-La Crosse, thanked constituents who reached out to his office against about the bill, writing, "hard-working Wisconsinites prevailed!"