

Wisconsin delegation votes along party lines as House passes tax overhaul bill

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The U.S. House Thursday signed off on its GOP tax overhaul bill, although it's unclear what fate the plan will have in the Senate.

The House approved the bill 227-205, with 13 Republicans joining all Dems in opposition. Town of Vermont Dem U.S. Rep. Mark Pocan, who's recovering from surgery, was among two lawmakers who didn't vote this afternoon.

Among the Wisconsin congressional delegation, the support for the bill fell along party lines, with all Republicans voting for it while U.S. Reps. Gwen Moore, D-Milwaukee, and Ron Kind, D-La Crosse, voted against it.

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House Speaker Paul Ryan, who joined his GOP colleagues at a news conference following the vote, said getting 227 lawmakers to agree on the "complicated" bill was "nothing short of extraordinary."

"The powers of the status quo in this town is so strong, yet 227 of the men and women in this Congress broke through that today," the Janesville Republican said, as he praised President Trump for being a "tremendous partner" on the issue.

Meanwhile, the Senate Finance Committee continued marking up that chamber's version of the bill Thursday, following U.S. Sen. Ron Johnson's declaration that he wouldn't support either the House or Senate tax bills in their current forms.

The Oshkosh Republican yesterday became the first GOP Senate member to say he'd vote against the bill, citing concerns around the tax treatment for pass-through entities — which file their tax returns as individual filers — compared to corporations.

See the roll call vote:

<http://clerk.house.gov/evs/2017/roll637.xml>

Wisconsin Dems blasted the chamber's passage of the bill, saying it would amount to a tax cut for the wealthy.

U.S. Rep. Ron Kind said in a statement the bill "isn't the right kind of reform Wisconsinites need," while U.S. Rep. Mark Pocan said Republicans who supported the bill opted to raise taxes on the middle class.

"While I'm still recovering from my recent heart surgery, had I been in Washington, my vote would not have been a 'no,' it would have been a 'hell no,'" Pocan said.

Republicans, meanwhile, applauded the effort.

U.S. Rep. Jim Sensenbrenner said in a tweet the bill is "a win for hardworking Americans."

"Updating the tax code will produce better jobs, fairer taxes, and bigger paychecks for the people of Wisconsin!" the Menomonee Falls Republican said.

U.S. Reps. Sean Duffy, R-Wausau, and Mike Gallagher, R-Green Bay, called on the Senate to act.

"I urge my colleagues in the Senate to do their part so that the hardworking taxpayers in the 8th District can get the relief they need and deserve," Gallagher said, adding the House bill "begins to move the ball down the field in a better direction."