

REPUBLICANS PREPARE TO KILL JOBS; DEMOCRATS ANGLE FOR MAJORITY LEADER

Brian Beutler reports that the Republicans are prepping to make sure no additional support for jobs gets passed next week.

Senate Democrats want to vote on the first installment of a jobs package as early as Monday, amping up the pressure on Republicans to get aboard. But for the moment, they're not biting.

"We'll have a vote on a jobs bill on Monday," Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid said at a press conference today.

There's just one wrinkle: According to the Senate's top vote counter, there is currently no Republican support for the proposal Democrats are putting forth—and with Scott Brown to be seated today as the 41st Republican Senator, they'll need at least one member of the minority to come aboard.

"You need two to tango. And you need Republicans for bipartisanship," said Senate Majority Whip Dick Durbin (D-IL).

Now, there's an interesting subplot to this.

Current Majority Leader (and very endangered incumbent) Harry Reid says no Republicans currently support the bill.

Majority Whip and second-most senior Democratic Senator Dick Durbin suggests there are no Republicans supporting the bill.

Meanwhile, Vice Chairman and third-most senior Democratic Senator Chuck Schumer has been working on a deal—at least for tax credits for

businesses that create jobs—with Republican Orrin Hatch.

Sens. Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.) and Orrin Hatch (R-Utah) released a plan Wednesday to give tax breaks to companies that add new workers, a proposal that is likely to become a key component of the jobs bill Senate Democratic leaders are hoping to unveil this week. President Obama has called for employers to receive a \$5,000 tax credit for each new employee they hire, while other lawmakers have floated different proposals for a job tax credit. The Schumer-Hatch plan, which would allow companies to avoid paying Social Security taxes for the duration of 2010 on each unemployed worker they hire, appears to have the most momentum in the Senate.

“Our payroll tax cut is a simple, cost-effective and bipartisan solution. It will help put more Americans to work right away,” Schumer said in a press release. Hatch added: “While Senator Schumer and I disagree on most issues, we’ve been able to come together on an affordable, effective and targeted proposal to get the American people back to work.”

Democratic leaders emphasize that they haven’t yet settled on an exact combination of items that will go in the Senate’s jobs package, but Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.) suggested Wednesday that he was taking a close look at the Schumer-Hatch bill.

Mind you, the Schumer-Hatch deal only deals with one aspect of the deal, not with things like COBRA subsidy extension. And I’ve got concerns about any plan that defunds social security.

Nevertheless, it seems that the drama over

whether Democrats will squabble themselves into irrelevance—and/or whether Republicans will sacrifice the interests of their constituents for partisan gain is playing out large on the jobs front.

Whatever is happening, it is preventing Americans from getting back to work.