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A NEW BIPARTISAN APPROACH
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Bipartisan Priority Reform Commission Act (BPRCA)

A Practical, Bipartisan Approach to Breaking Congressional Gridlock

The Problem

For decades, Congress has struggled to resolve major national problems, including immigration reform, Social Security and Medicare funding, health insurance, housing, structural budget deficits, and federal election reform. Increasing political polarization has made compromise increasingly difficult, leaving critical issues unresolved despite widespread recognition that action is necessary.

The Bipartisan Priority Reform Commission Act (BPRCA) offers a practical alternative. Rather than attempting to eliminate partisan differences, it establishes a structured process through which Republicans and Democrats can develop legislative solutions together—and guarantees qualifying proposals an up-or-down vote in Congress.

The Proposed Solution

The BPRCA would establish independent, bipartisan Reform Commissions to address a limited number of national priorities selected by Congress. Each Commission would bring together congressional representatives and outside experts, conduct public hearings, evaluate competing proposals, and develop legislation for congressional consideration.

The legislation incorporates the following principal features:

1. Bipartisan Commissions

Each Commission would have 16 members:

- Eight Members of Congress, equally divided between Republicans and Democrats and between the House and Senate.
- Eight non-legislative experts, appointed on a bipartisan basis.

Commission approval would require at least nine affirmative votes, including at least two votes from congressional members of each party. Neither party could independently secure approval without meaningful support from the other.

2. Limited National Priorities

During each two-year Congress, the House and Senate could jointly select one or two priority issues for consideration. The eight eligible issues are:

- Comprehensive immigration reform
- Social Security funding
- Medicare and Medicaid funding
- Health insurance policy and regulation
- Housing policy and regulation
- Structural budget deficits
- Federal primary and general election reform
- Artificial intelligence regulation

If Congress fails to select an issue within 60 days, an issue would be automatically designated under the Act.

3. Public Participation and Transparency

Each Commission must conduct at least three public hearings, complete those hearings within six months of its first meeting, and provide at least 60 days for public comment.

Commission proceedings would include publicly recorded votes, disclosure of rejected proposals and amendments, and preservation of minority views.

4. A Defined Timetable for Action

Commissions must submit their findings and legislative recommendations within ten months of their first meeting.

Before final approval, Members of Congress would have a ten-day window to propose amendments. Amendments could be incorporated into an approved bill only with the requisite bipartisan Commission support.

These deadlines are intended to prevent indefinite deliberation while allowing sufficient time for public participation and substantive analysis.

5. Guaranteed Congressional Consideration

Commission-approved legislation that secures the required bipartisan congressional sponsorship would qualify for expedited consideration in both chambers.

Under these procedures:

- Congressional committees would have a defined period to consider the legislation before automatic discharge.
- Floor debate would be limited to 20 hours in each chamber.
- Only previously approved amendments would be permitted.
- The Senate filibuster would not apply to qualifying legislation.
- Each chamber would proceed to an up-or-down vote, with passage requiring a simple majority of those voting, a quorum being present.

Congress would retain complete authority to approve or reject every legislative proposal.

6. A Fallback Mechanism to Prevent Deadlock

If a Commission cannot approve legislation, qualifying alternative proposals could nevertheless receive expedited congressional consideration upon securing broader bipartisan sponsorship.

A fallback proposal would require at least 25 House sponsors or cosponsors, including two from each party, for expedited House consideration, or at least ten Senate sponsors or cosponsors, including two from each party, for expedited Senate consideration.

Proposals encountering a prolonged Commission impasse could become eligible for the fallback process without waiting for the Commission's ten-month deadline, provided the Act's requirements are satisfied.

This mechanism prevents disagreement within a Commission from automatically ending the legislative process.

7. Independent Oversight

A five-member bipartisan Oversight Board would supervise Commission appointments, deadlines, hearings, reporting, and transparency requirements. The Board would exercise administrative oversight without authority to enact legislation or direct congressional votes.

8. A Limited, Two-Congress Trial Period

The Act would authorize the establishment of new Commissions through the end of the Congress immediately succeeding the Congress in which the Act is enacted—ordinarily a period encompassing two Congresses.

Commissions and qualifying legislative proceedings already underway could continue under the Act's savings provisions, subject to each chamber's constitutional authority over its rules.

Congress could then assess the process and determine whether to extend it.

Why This Approach Is Different

The BPRCA does not require Republicans and Democrats to abandon their principles, surrender legislative authority, or agree in advance on substantive policy outcomes.

Instead, it changes the process by which Congress addresses difficult questions.

The proposal combines three essential elements:

Bipartisan participation: Neither party can independently approve Commission legislation.

Public accountability: Hearings, public comment, recorded votes, minority reports, and disclosure of rejected amendments make the process transparent.

A guaranteed decision: Qualifying proposals cannot be indefinitely blocked through committee inaction or a Senate filibuster. Congress must ultimately vote.

The Act preserves the constitutional authority of both chambers to change their procedural rules and preserves the legislative responsibility of elected representatives.

The central premise of the Bipartisan Priority Reform Commission Act is straightforward: Congress does not have to agree on every major policy question before agreeing on a better way to resolve those questions**.**

By establishing a disciplined, bipartisan process with enforceable deadlines and guaranteed votes, the BPRCA offers Congress a practical opportunity to confront longstanding national problems that the ordinary legislative process has repeatedly failed to resolve.

The objective is not to guarantee agreement. It is to guarantee that serious bipartisan proposals receive a fair hearing—and a vote.

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