

timesunion

<http://www.timesunion.com/7day-state/article/Schumer-runs-victory-lap-after-cutting-deal-with-12181108.php>

Schumer runs victory lap after cutting deal with Trump



WASHINGTON, DC - SEPTEMBER 06: U.S. Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) (L) makes a point to President Donald Trump in the Oval Office prior to his departure from the White House September 6, 2017 in Washington, DC. President Trump is traveling to North Dakota for a tax reform event with workers from the energy sector. (Photo by Alex Wong/Getty Images)

WASHINGTON - It may not be the dawning of the Age of Aquarius, but Senate Minority Leader Charles E. Schumer is savoring - for now - a rare win over Republican opponents on Capitol Hill and a new-found "bromance" with President Donald Trump.

A day after Trump the Democrat-

flagellator turned into Trump the bipartisan-dealmaker, the president called Schumer to rave about the positive news coverage they got on their agreement on funding the government and extending the debt ceiling for three months.

In doing a deal with Capitol Hill's top Democrats, Trump turned his back on House Speaker Paul Ryan, R-Wisc., who called the Democratic short-term proposal "ridiculous and disgraceful." Ryan said he preferred a longer timeline on the debt ceiling to reassure credit markets.

Among the other new outcroppings of bipartisan cooperation Wednesday: Trump, at Pelosi's request, tweeted there would be no round up of youthful immigrant "dreamers" for the next six months.

Asked by reporters at the White House if the budget-debt deal signals more bipartisanship, Trump responded: "I hope so."

Cooperation between the parties is "a great thing for our country," he said. "That's what the people of the United States want to see."

Democrats close to Schumer expressed cautious optimism that bipartisanship would continue, at least on some level.

"I regard it as a positive step and an act of statesmanship," said Sen. Richard Blumenthal, D-Conn., who much like Schumer has been the target of Trump insults on Twitter. "If it leads to bipartisan compromises, it will be highly significant. We'll see what the next step is."

Long-time Schumer watchers expressed little doubt that Schumer was exulting in his new-found White House clout, even if temporary.

"I think this is not only where Schumer wants to be but where he thought he would be early on, with the assumption that Trump would be more consistently pragmatic in looking to put points on the board," said Lawrence Levy, executive director of the National Center for Suburban Studies at Hofstra University. "I always said that if Trump

was smart, he'd make Schumer his new best friend."

But it remains unclear whether the agreement is one-off or signals further cooperation on multiple fronts, including infrastructure, health care and immigration reform.

"I'm skeptical about anything long term because the ideological barriers are too great," said Gerald Benjamin, a veteran political scientist at SUNY New Paltz. "The jury is still out."

Ryan on Wednesday soft-pedaled Trump's rebuff, explaining it as a "bipartisan moment" aimed at reassuring the country at a time when Texas is recovering from Hurricane Harvey and Florida is threatened by Hurricane Irma.

But House conservatives were having none of it. The deal "continues the status quo or even worsens the trajectory on spending," wrote Rep. Mark Walker, R-N.C. in a letter to Ryan on behalf of the Republican Study Committee, a group of more than 150 conservative House members.

The atmosphere of good will is a sharp contrast to just a few months ago, when Trump and Schumer were at daggers drawn on social media. In May after firing FBI Director James Comey, Trump derided "cryin' Chuck Schumer" on Twitter - a reference to Schumer showing emotion at a speech protesting Trump's proposed ban on Muslim travel to the U.S.

In March amid back-and-forth on the investigation of the Trump campaign's contacts with Russian intelligence, Trump tweeted a 2003 picture of Schumer and Russian President Vladimir Putin smiling while consuming coffee and donuts in New York City.

"Total hypocrite," Trump said, suggesting Schumer should be investigated for his own links to Russia.

Schumer has taken plenty of his own shots at Trump. In June after Trump held a Cabinet meeting in which his top appointees heaped praise on him, Schumer held a mock staff meeting in which his subordinates complimented his Sunday talk-show

prowess and great-looking hair.

© 2017 Hearst Communications, Inc.

H E A R S T