Whether Democrats agree to the $748 billion propos
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Bipartisan lawmakers split their initial $908 billion stimulus framework into two parts • one with provisions that Republicans and Democrats agree on and one that marries their two sticking points • in a final effort to get a deal done before the end of the year.

•We've had a Christmas miracle occur in Washington, • said Sen. Susan Collins (R-ME), who supports both bills. •I want to thank my Democratic and Republican colleagues in the Senate for working so hard to bring us to this day. •

A $748 billion stimulus bill includes provisions both parties support, including the extension of two expiring unemployment programs, an additional $300 a week in jobless benefits, a second round of the Paycheck Protection Program, rental assistance, student loan forbearance, and funding for testing, tracing and vaccine distribution, among others.

The second bill includes just two provisions: Liability protections for businesses that some Democrats characterize as a •poison pill• and $160 billion for state and local government aid, which Republicans • including Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) • have called a •blue state bailout. ••The split could help Leader McConnell with the process, • Mark Harkins, a former congressional staffer and senior fellow at Georgetown•s Government Affairs Institute, told Yahoo Money. •But it is unclear what happens if the Senate passes the smaller bill and the House adds back in the state and local aid. •

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