

House Speaker John Boehner (R-Ohio) on Friday told his rank and file he's trying to "make chicken salad out of chicken s---t" in the final days of this year's congressional session.

The remark from Boehner, confirmed to The Hill by a member who was in the room, comes as some Republicans are pushing back against proposals to extend a payroll-tax cut and unemployment benefits.

House Republicans who attended Friday's meeting expressed resistance to an outline from Boehner to extend a number of programs and tax provisions, the source said.

In a bid to win conservative support and force Democrats' hands, Republicans would include measures to speed up a federal decision on the Keystone XL oil sands pipeline and delay certain Environmental Protection Agency regulations.

Several Republicans stood up in the meeting to oppose the extension of the payroll-tax cut, citing concerns about Social Security and the fact that GOP leaders want to pay for one year's worth of spending and tax relief over a decade.

The Speaker gave his troops a blunt assessment of the political situation, and told his conference he's trying to score political and policy wins with little time left on the clock, leadership sources said.

The White House is trying to turn the screws on Republicans by accusing them of wanting to allow a tax increase on working Americans.

Rep. John Campbell (R-Calif.) said GOP leaders were not prepared for the cool reception they received.

“I think they were a little surprised by the pushback — they looked a little deflated to me,” he said, before noting his opposition to extending any of the expiring provisions.

Campbell's opposition, echoed by a number of GOP colleagues who spoke to The Hill, is to the idea that **“now we're a part of kicking the can down the road. ... But shouldn't we try to run the country, shouldn't we try to do the right thing, shouldn't we try to get this deficit under control?”**

The nearly 90-minute meeting with leadership was “good, healthy, buoyant conversation,” Chief Deputy Majority Whip Peter Roskam (R-Ill.) told The Hill.

“I think everybody is reflecting on the feedback,” he said.

Asked when the House GOP leadership would present their plan, Majority Leader Eric Cantor (R-Va.) told The Hill: “Stay tuned.”