



SENATE MAJORITY RULE VOTING

Whereas, the United States Constitution empowers the United States Senate to adopt its rules and procedures; and

Whereas, the Senate adopted Rule XXII, the cloture rule, in 1917 requiring a two-thirds vote to limit debate; and

Whereas, from the 1920s through the 1950s only 10 cloture petitions were filed on average per decade and reached 28 in the 1960s; and

Whereas, the Senate amended Rule XXII in 1975 to permit three-fifth votes in order to limit debate; and

Whereas, 435 cloture motions were filed between 2001 and 2009; and

Whereas, the late Senator Robert Byrd (D-WV) declared in 2010, “The filibuster is a powerful tool, and it ought to be invoked only in the most extraordinary circumstances;” and

Whereas, the use of the filibuster is no longer extraordinary and its use has made the Senate into a supermajority institution in order for major legislation to be considered and enacted; and

Whereas, the use of anonymous holds on nominations and legislation also has slowed the efficiency of legislating and governing; and

Whereas, the use of filibuster can protect minority rights and stop an overzealous majority from enacting legislation; and

Whereas, the United States Senate Committee on Rules and Administration has been holding a series of hearings entitled, “Examining the Filibuster” on April 22, May 19 and June 23, 2010 and anticipates holding more hearings on the subjects the filibuster and anonymous holds; and

Whereas, several proposals have been offered to change Rule XXII ranging from its abolition to changing the rules on the number of votes needed to invoke cloture, by reducing the number required to invoke cloture by three votes each time a cloture vote on a matter is taken.



Therefore, be it resolved that the Alliance for Retired Americans urges the United States Senate to return to the historic practice of using the filibuster only on extraordinary occasions; and

Be it further resolved that the Alliance for Retired Americans urges the United States Senate to abolish the practice of anonymous holds on legislation and nominations; and

Be it further resolved that the Alliance for Retired Americans urges the United States Senate to amend Rule XXII in order to allow a lower threshold to invoke cloture each time a cloture vote is taken on a matter until that number reaches a simple majority.