
SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

ONE HUNDRED EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION { CONVENED JULY 17, 2023 }

SECOND SESSION { }

SENATE PROCEDURE



SENATE PROCEDURE

Debate

There are generally no time limits on debate unless the limits are established by a unanimous consent request or by invoking cloture. When operating under a time limit, either the President or the Secretary is responsible for tracking time used. Also, when under a time limit, there will usually be one member of each party that will control the time for his or her side. That Senator will yield a specific amount of time to another Senator. Once the time yielded has expired, or that Senator "yields back the balance of his/her time," the Senator controlling debate for the other party can yield time to a Senator. This process continues until all time for debate has expired.

Unanimous Consent

A SENATOR: Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that _____.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER: Is there objection?

No objection

THE PRESIDING OFFICER: Without objection, so ordered.

If there is objection

THE PRESIDING OFFICER: Objection is heard, the request falls.

Rule XII Process to place a bill directly onto the calendar.

SENATOR: Mr. President, I send a bill to the desk and ask for its first reading.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER: The Clerk will read the bill by title for the first time.

** The legislative clerk will read the title of the bill **

SENATOR: Mr. President, I ask for its second reading, and in order to place the bill directly onto the calendar under Rule 12, I object to my own request.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER: Objection is heard. The bill will be placed on the Calendar.

SENATE PROCEDURE

Voting

Voice Vote:

PRESIDING OFFICER: All in favor say "aye." Those opposed say "no." The "ayes" ("noes") appear to have it. The "ayes" ("noes") have it, and the:

- Bill – is passed or not passed
- Joint Resolution – is passed or not passed
- Resolution – is agreed to or not agreed to
- Motion – is agreed to or not agreed to
- Amendment – is adopted or not adopted
- Amendment of the other House to a bill – is concurred in or not concurred in
- Point of Order – is sustained or overruled
- Decision of the Chair – is sustained or not sustained.

Roll Call Vote:

A SENATOR: I ask for the yeas and nays.

PRESIDING OFFICER: Is there sufficient second?

If there is sufficient second:

PRESIDING OFFICER: There appears to be. The question is Insert the question. The Clerk will call the roll.

****Clerk calls the roll****

PRESIDING OFFICER: Does any Senator wish to change his or her vote? On this vote, the yeas are ____; the nays are _____. The

- Bill – is passed or not passed
- Joint Resolution – is passed or not passed
- Resolution – is agreed to or not agreed to
- Motion – is agreed to or not agreed to
- Amendment – is adopted or not adopted
- Amendment of the other House to a bill – is concurred in or not concurred in
- Point of Order – is sustained or overruled
- Decision of the Chair – is sustained or not sustained.

If there is not sufficient second:

PRESIDING OFFICER: There is not a sufficient second to order the yeas and nays.

Appeal from the Decision of the Chair

A SENATOR: Mr. President, I take an appeal from the decision of the chair.

PRESIDING OFFICER: The Senator from _____ appeals from the decision of the Chair. The question is (state the point of order and the decision of the Chair). Shall the decision of the Chair stand as the judgment of the Senate?

**** Move to voting section****

SENATE PROCEDURE

Amendments

Amendment in Writing:

A SENATOR: Mr. President, I offer an amendment which I send to the desk.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER: It's been moved and seconded to amend the bill. The Senator name of person who made the motion is recognized.*

** continue with debate until there is no further debate or cloture is invoked**

THE PRESIDING OFFICER: The question occurs on the amendment.

** move to voting section **

Amendment Not in Writing:

A SENATOR: Mr. President, I move to amend the bill by _____.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER: It's been moved and seconded to amend the bill. The Senator name of person who made the motion is recognized.*

** continue with debate until there is no further debate or cloture is invoked**

THE PRESIDING OFFICER: The question occurs on the amendment.

** move to voting section **

Invoking Cloture

A SENATOR: Mr. President, I send to the desk a cloture motion and ask that it be read.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER: The cloture motion having been presented under Rule XVIII, the Chair directs the Clerk to read the motion.

** The Clerk reads the cloture motion **

THE PRESIDING OFFICER: Without objection, the mandatory quorum call under Rule XVIII will be waived. The question is: Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on _____ shall be brought to a close? The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule, and the clerk will call the roll.

** Clerk calls the roll ***

THE PRESIDING OFFICER: On this vote the yeas are ____; the nays are _____. Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn, having voted (not having voted) in the affirmative, the motion is agreed to (not agreed to).

SENATE PROCEDURE

Resolving House/Senate differences

If the House amends a Senate bill, or the Senate amends a House bill, the other House can either concur to the amendments or request a conference committee.

Concur to the House Amendment(s)

A SENATOR: Mr. President, I move that the Senate concur to the House Amendment(s) to the bill _____.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER: It's been moved and seconded to concur to the Senate Amendment(s) to the bill _____. The Senator name of person who made the motion is recognized.*

** continue with debate until there is no further debate or cloture is invoked**

THE PRESIDING OFFICER: The question occurs on the motion to concur to the House Amendment(s) to the bill _____.

** move to voting section **

Request a Conference Committee

A Senator: Mr. President, I move that the Senate request a conference with the House on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the bill _____.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER: It's been moved and seconded to request a conference with the House on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the bill _____. The Senator name of person who made the motion is recognized.*

** continue with debate until there is no further debate or cloture is invoked**

THE PRESIDING OFFICER: The question occurs on the motion request a conference with the House.

** move to voting section **

** If adopted:

THE PRESIDING OFFICER: The Senate has requested a conference with the House. The Senate will send five Members as conferees. The Majority Leader will appoint three Members and the Minority Leader will appoint two members.

SENATE PROCEDURE

Veto

When a veto is received from the President, the Presiding Officer is to immediately inform the Senate, and any message from the President is to be read. Once it is read, it becomes the pending question. According to the Constitution, a vote to override a veto must be done by roll call. 2/3rds of the Members voting, a quorum being present, must agree to repass the bill over the President's objections.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER: The Chair lays before the Senate the President's veto message on bill number and title, which the Clerk will read, and it will be spread in full upon the journal.

**** Clerk reads the message ****

THE PRESIDING OFFICER: The question is: Shall the bill pass, the objections of the President of the United States to the contrary notwithstanding?

**** continue with debate until there is no further debate or cloture is invoked****

THE PRESIDING OFFICER: The question is: Shall the bill pass, the objections of the President of the United States to the contrary notwithstanding? The yeas and nays are required. The Clerk will call the role.

**** After roll call, tally votes.****

THE PRESIDING OFFICER: On this vote, the yeas are ____ and the nays are _____. Two-thirds of the Senators present and voting, having voted in the affirmative the bill, on reconsideration, is passed, the objections of the President of the United States to the contrary.

OR

On this vote, the yeas are ____; the nays are _____. Two-thirds of the Senators present and voting, not having voted in the affirmative, the bill, on reconsideration, fails to pass over the President's veto.

Vote by the Vice President

THE VICE PRESIDENT: On this vote, the yeas are _____. The Senate being equally divided, the Vice President votes in the affirmative (or negative) and the

Bill – is passed or not passed

Joint Resolution – is passed or not passed

Resolution – is agreed to or not agreed to

Motion – is agreed to or not agreed to

Amendment – is adopted or not adopted

Amendment of the other House to a bill – is concurred in or not concurred in

Point of Order – is sustained or overruled

Decision of the Chair – is sustained or not sustained.