

**How a Senate Filibuster works in LegSim**

When a committee reports a bill, the Majority Leader places it on the appropriate Calendar for possible floor consideration.

At that point in time, Senators can place Holds (under Clerk) to indicate that they have reservations about bringing the bill to the floor.

**THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT** \*\* In LegSim, in order to filibuster, a senator must place a hold before any vote has been scheduled for the bill.\*\* If a hold is not placed in time, the senator cannot filibuster the bill. Thus it is very important to pay attention to what is on the calendar.

1. The moment a bill is placed on the calendar any member can register a **Hold** on the bill (in the Senate this is a Notice of Intent to Object to Proceeding.In LegSim, a hold is placed by going to **Clerk -> Legislative Holds**. Members can both add and remove a hold from this interface.  
  
2. The Majority Leader proposes a floor procedure. If the Majority Leader proposes a floor procedure too quickly, then members won't have a chance to register holds so a fair majority leader will be transparent about their intended actions...

The first step for considering a bill is for the majority leader to propose a **motion to proceed** to consideration of the bill, which can take two forms:

 - **Unanimous Consent Agreement (UCA)**: requires zero 'no' votes to pass, but then the bill cannot be filibustered  
 - **Motion to Proceed**: requires simple majority to pass, but the bill can be filibustered  
  
As part of this process, the majority leader **specifies the procedures** under which the bill will be considered (in the motion itself). For example, a UCA might propose that no amendments are in order or that there will be 5 minutes of debate. But it is also worth considering whether such a restrictive procedure will win unanimous support! If not, the majority leader is back to square one.   
  
3. Once the motion to proceed is scheduled, anyone who has already registered a hold can initiate a LegSim filibuster by selecting the '**still debating**' option on the vote that is now available on their home page. This stops the vote clock until either the filibuster ends (every senator who is ‘still debating’ withdraws and casts a vote) or **cloture** is achieved.

4.  **Cloture.** While a vote is being filibustered, the Majority Leader has the ability to schedule a cloture (‘closure’) vote. Cloture votes require a 3/5ths majority and "present" votes as "no" votes. If the cloture motion is adopted by a 3/5th vote, the vote clock start again on the vote that was filibustered and it cannot be filibustered again.  
  
5. If the motion to proceed is adopted, the legislation in question can now be scheduled for amendment and final passage votes. These votes are also subject to filibuster using the same process described above, unless the motion to proceed that was adopted limits debate in a way that prevents further filibusters. In that case the chamber leader should schedule votes so that they cannot be filibustered.

6. One more note. The course administrator has the ability to override this process and schedule a vote on any bill at any time.

More questions about this process? Contact us at support@legsim.org