

Background Video Questions

Deliberation Topic: Should the legislative filibuster rule be eliminated in the Senate?

Directions: *To provide a background for the deliberation, answer the questions associated with each of the videos.*

The History of the Filibuster in the Senate- Betty Koed, U.S. Senate Historian (3:17)

- Explain what is meant by a filibuster in the Senate.
- Describe what happens during a filibuster.
- What specific issues have filibusters been used for in the past?
- What is cloture and how is it used?
- How has the use of filibusters and cloture expanded in the last few decades?

The Increase in the Use of Cloture and Filibusters- Former Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) (4:47)

- According to Senator Reid, how was invoking cloture used in the past? How has this changed recently?
- How has the increase in the use of filibusters and cloture impacted the functioning of the Senate?
- How many votes are needed to invoke cloture and stop a filibuster?
- Why did Senator Reid change the filibuster rules for some nominations?

Political Parties and the Senate Filibuster- Congressional historians Richard Baker and Donald Ritchie (4:56)

- What does Mr. Baker mean by the "two kinds of filibusters?"
- According to Mr. Baker, why is compromise an essential part of how the Senate functions?
- How has the makeup of the Senate and the political parties changed since the 1970s? How has that affected the Senate?
- What is meant by the "nuclear option?"
- Describe the history of the "nuclear option" in the Senate.

Legislative Filibusters and Judicial Nominations- Paul Kane, *Washington Post* (3:05)

- Describe the differences between the executive calendar and the legislative calendar in the Senate. How do the filibuster and cloture rules apply to these different Senate responsibilities?