

Senate obstruction

During the debate on the stimulus package, the number 60 kept coming up as the necessary majority in the Senate for any legislation to pass. Why, suddenly, was 60 the majority? Why not a simple majority?

What happened was the minority Republican Party threatened to filibuster. (Sixty votes are required to close debate.) This is the same party that as recently as 2005 (when it still held the majority), called any effort of the Democrats to filibuster Supreme Court nominees they disagreed with obstructionist and threatened to invoke the "nuclear option" to bring about an up-or-down vote.

We need to call the 60-vote majority what it really was: obstructionist. Republicans played petty partisan politics while the nation is in crisis. A filibuster is still a filibuster, and an obstruction is still obstruction.

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