

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

FINISHING THE SENATE'S WORK

Mr. REID. Madam President, as a Christian, no one has to remind me of the importance of Christmas for all of the Christian faith, all of their families all across America.

I do not think any of us, and I do not need to hear the sanctimonious lectures of Senators KYL and DEMINT to remind me of what Christmas means.

My question is, Where were their concerns about Christmas when they led filibuster after filibuster on major pieces of legislation during this entire Congress—not once but 87 times, taking days and days of the people's time in the Senate on wasteful delay?

Senate Republicans need look no further than themselves in casting blame for the predicament we are in right now. In this Congress, I repeat, Republicans have waged 87 filibusters. They have used every procedural trick in the book to delay legislation that is important to the American people.

We have been able to work through most of that and have what, in the mind of Norm Ornstein, the most successful Congress watcher in decades says is the most successful, productive Congress in the history of the country. We have done that in spite of all of the roadblocks that have been thrown in our way.

In just a few minutes, we are going to proceed to the START treaty. I am told the Republicans are going to make us read the entire treaty in an effort to stall us from passing it. Isn't that wonderful. That treaty has been here since April or May of this year—plenty of time to read it.

These are additional days of wasted time that we could be using to pass legislation to get home for the holidays. Yet some of my Republican colleagues have the nerve to whine about having to stay in action and do the work the American people pay us to do. We make large salaries. We could work, as most American do, during the holidays.

Perhaps Senators KYL and DEMINT have been in Washington too long because in my State, Nevadans employed in casinos and hotels and throughout the State of Nevada—on our ranches, basically everywhere—have to work hard on holidays, including Christmas, to support their families.

The mines do not shut down in Nevada on Christmas. People work. They get paid double time a lot of times when they have good contracts. But they work on Christmas holidays. Most people do not get 2 weeks off at any time let alone Christmas week. These people who are lucky enough to have a job in these trying times need to work extra hard just to make ends meet.

So it is offensive to me and millions of working Americans across this country for any Senator to suggest that working through the Christmas holidays is somehow sacrilegious or disrespectful.

The path to finishing this year lies in the hands of Senators such as Senators KYL and DEMINT and any other Senate Republican who is trying to run out the clock or run out the door without finishing the American people's business. If they decide to work with us, we can all have a happy holiday. If they do not, we will continue until we finish the people's business.

TREATY WITH RUSSIA ON MEASURES FOR FURTHER REDUCTION AND LIMITATION OF STRATEGIC OFFENSIVE ARMS—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. REID. Madam President, I move to proceed to executive session to Calendar No. 7, the START treaty. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Indiana (Mr. BAYH) is necessarily absent.

Mr. KYL. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. ENZI).

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 66, nays 32, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 277 Ex.]

YEAS—66

Akaka	Gillibrand	Murkowski
Baucus	Graham	Murray
Begich	Hagan	Nelson (NE)
Bennet	Harkin	Nelson (FL)
Bennett	Inouye	Pryor
Bingaman	Johnson	Reed
Boxer	Kerry	Reid
Brown (MA)	Klobuchar	Rockefeller
Brown (OH)	Kohl	Sanders
Cantwell	Landrieu	Schumer
Cardin	Lautenberg	Shaheen
Carper	Leahy	Snowe
Casey	Levin	Specter
Collins	Lieberman	Stabenow
Conrad	Lincoln	Tester
Coons	Lugar	Udall (CO)
Dodd	Manchin	Udall (NM)
Dorgan	McCain	Voinovich
Durbin	McCaskill	Warner
Feingold	Menendez	Webb
Feinstein	Merkley	Whitehouse
Franken	Mikulski	Wyden

NAYS—32

Alexander	Crapo	Kyl
Barrasso	DeMint	LeMieux
Bond	Ensign	McConnell
Brownback	Grassley	Risch
Bunning	Gregg	Roberts
Burr	Hatch	Sessions
Chambliss	Hutchison	Shelby
Coburn	Inhofe	Thune
Cochran	Isakson	Vitter
Corker	Johanns	Wicker
Cornyn	Kirk	

NOT VOTING—2

Bayh
Enzi

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

TREATY WITH RUSSIA ON MEASURES FOR FURTHER REDUCTION AND LIMITATION OF STRATEGIC OFFENSIVE ARMS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the treaty.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will return to legislative session for the remarks by the Senator from Arkansas.

The majority leader is recognized.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, could we have the attention of everyone in the Senate.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senate will come to order.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I have had a number of conversations in the recent minutes with the Republican leader. I think we would be well advised—and we are going to proceed along this avenue unless someone has an objection—that for the rest of the day and the evening, however long people want to visit, we will be in a period of morning business. As soon as Senator LINCOLN finishes her remarks, we will be in a period of morning business, and Senators will be allowed to speak for up to 15 minutes. I put that in the form of a consent request.

We have a number of Senators over here and on the Republican side who want to speak on the START treaty, but people are not going to be restricted to that. They can speak about anything they want. Then tomorrow morning we will return to the START treaty.

So this afternoon, I again ask unanimous consent that we be in a period of morning business and that Senators be allowed to speak for up to 15 minutes each during this period of morning business, with the understanding that tomorrow morning, at a reasonable hour, we will return to the START treaty and begin debate directly on that.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection?

The majority leader is recognized.

Mr. REID. And part of that agreement is that today will be for debate only.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection?

The Republican leader is recognized.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, and I am certainly not going to object, I want to thank the majority leader. I think it is a good way to go forward. There was some suggestion that some on this side of the aisle wanted to read the treaty. Our view is that that is not essential.