

our country over partisan politics or ideology and failing to understand that if there need to be reforms in the Fed, let's reform them, but let's not walk away from an importantly critical individual who has made a difference in our economy and our Nation. For that reason, I urge my colleagues to terminate this filibuster—vote to end that—and then vote to confirm Ben Bernanke as the Chairman of the Federal Reserve.

I have been told I can speak until 3:20, but I will not take up all the time. As I said a moment ago, this is one of those moments where we need to step back and recognize the danger of our actions. This is not just a free vote. I know some people would prefer—they have the right to vote—to vote against the guy but hope he gets confirmed. That may work, but it is dangerously precarious. If we don't have 60 votes to end this filibuster, and if we don't produce the votes to confirm him, then I think this Congress, this body, regretfully, will have to bear the responsibility of abandoning the very people and situations we talk about today—jobs, the housing market, getting our economy back on its feet again—and anticipate the kind of reaction we will see in the markets and elsewhere, setting us back weeks, if not months or years, in our ability to get through this fragile period and allowing the hopes and aspirations and the confidence of the American people to grow.

I know it is an awful lot to stake the future of all that on just a nomination, but this is not some Assistant Under Secretary of some other agency. It is the central bank Chairman of the most central bank in the world. It is a critically important component in us continuing our path of economic recovery. We will bear the collective responsibility of failing to meet that obligation if we walk away from this obligation by either continuing this filibuster or defeating this nominee.

So I urge my colleagues, Democrats and Republicans—there is enough to battle about on how we are going to deal with these issues in the coming weeks, but on this matter let us send a message to the American people that we understand their frustrations, their worries, and we are doing everything we can to get us back on track again. Witness the President's remarks last evening.

You have a laser-like focus on the economy and job creation in our country. Don't make that effort fail because we send a message to our markets and the world that we cannot confirm an individual who saved us from an economic catastrophe in our country.

I urge my colleagues to pass the cloture motion to end debate and then, of course, to confirm Ben Bernanke as chairman of the Federal Reserve.

With that, I yield back the remainder of the time and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

CLOTURE MOTION

Under the previous order, the clerk will report the motion to invoke cloture.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION.

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Ben S. Bernanke, of New Jersey, to be Chairman of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Ben S. Bernanke, of New Jersey, to be Chairman of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.  
The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 77, nays 23, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 15 Ex.]

YEAS—77

Akaka	Enzi	Lugar
Alexander	Feinstein	McCaskill
Barrasso	Franken	McConnell
Baucus	Gillibrand	Menendez
Bayh	Graham	Mikulski
Bennet	Gregg	Murkowski
Bennett	Hagan	Murray
Bingaman	Harkin	Nelson (NE)
Bond	Hatch	Nelson (FL)
Boxer	Inouye	Pryor
Brown	Isakson	Reed
Burr	Johanns	Reid
Burriss	Johnson	Rockefeller
Byrd	Kaufman	Schumer
Cardin	Kerry	Shaheen
Carper	Kirk	Snowe
Casey	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Chambliss	Kohl	Tester
Coburn	Kyl	Udall (CO)
Cochran	Landrieu	Udall (NM)
Collins	Lautenberg	Voinovich
Conrad	Leahy	Warner
Corker	LeMieux	Webb
Dodd	Levin	Whitehouse
Dorgan	Lieberman	Wyden
Durbin	Lincoln	

NAYS—23

Begich	Feingold	Sanders
Brownback	Grassley	Sessions
Bunning	Hutchison	Shelby
Cantwell	Inhofe	Specter
Cornyn	McCain	Thune
Crapo	Merkley	Vitter
DeMint	Risch	Wicker
Ensign	Roberts	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 77, the nays are 23. Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn having voted in the affirmative, the motion is agreed to.

Under the previous order, all postcloture time is yielded back. The

question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Ben S. Bernanke, of New Jersey, to be Chairman of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System?

Mr. ENSIGN. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.  
The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. SHAHEEN). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 70, nays 30, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 16 Ex.]

YEAS—70

Akaka	Enzi	McConnell
Alexander	Feinstein	Menendez
Barrasso	Gillibrand	Mikulski
Baucus	Graham	Murkowski
Bayh	Gregg	Murray
Bennet	Hagan	Nelson (NE)
Bennett	Hatch	Nelson (FL)
Bingaman	Inouye	Pryor
Bond	Isakson	Reed
Brown	Johanns	Reid
Burr	Johnson	Rockefeller
Burriss	Kerry	Schumer
Byrd	Kirk	Shaheen
Cardin	Klobuchar	Snowe
Carper	Kohl	Stabenow
Casey	Kyl	Tester
Chambliss	Landrieu	Udall (CO)
Coburn	Lautenberg	Udall (NM)
Cochran	Leahy	Voinovich
Collins	Levin	Warner
Conrad	Lieberman	Webb
Corker	Lincoln	Wyden
Dodd	Lugar	
Durbin	McCaskill	

NAYS—30

Begich	Feingold	Risch
Boxer	Franken	Roberts
Brownback	Grassley	Sanders
Bunning	Harkin	Sessions
Cantwell	Hutchison	Shelby
Cornyn	Inhofe	Specter
Crapo	Kaufman	Thune
DeMint	LeMieux	Vitter
Dorgan	McCain	Whitehouse
Ensign	Merkley	Wicker

The nomination was confirmed.  
The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid on the table. The President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume legislative session.

The Senator from Nebraska is recognized.

BUDGET RECONCILIATION

Mr. NELSON of Nebraska. Madam President, I rise to make a parliamentary inquiry regarding the applicability of the Senate's cloture rules to the budget reconciliation process. Under the Congressional Budget Act which governs Senate procedure for consideration of a reconciliation conference report, the question is: Is a cloture vote necessary prior to a vote on adoption of the conference report?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. No.