

Published on *The National Law Review* <https://natlawreview.com>

Dewonkify – Filibuster

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The Word: Filibuster

Definition: A filibuster is a procedural tactic that is used to extend debate, delay a vote, or prevent legislative action. It is used in the U.S. Senate to require 60% of members to vote in favor of “[cloture](#)” to bring legislation up for consideration. The House can cut off debate with a simple majority vote.

Used in a Sentence: “Senate leaders reached a deal on Tuesday morning to preserve the filibuster in exchange for Senate confirmation of President Obama’s long-sought first director of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, as well as other stalled nominees.” from “[Senators Reach Agreement to Avert Fight Over Filibuster](#),” by Jonathan Weisman, New York Times, July 16, 2013

History: The word “filibuster” is derived from the Spanish term filibustero which means “freebooting” and the Dutch word vrijbouter meaning “pirate.”

Ezra Klein of the Washington Post walks through history of the filibuster and the increasing frequency with which it has been used in his May 15, 2012 article, “[The History of the Filibuster in One Graph](#).”

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National Law Review, Volume III, Number 198

Source URL: <https://natlawreview.com/article/dewonkify-filibuster>