

- [Buy Cheap Autodesk Building Design Suite Ultimate 2014 \(32-bit & 64-bit\)](#)
- [Discount - Lynda.com - SQL Server 2008 Essential Training](#)
- [9.95\\$ Lynda.com - iOS 4 App Development New Features cheap oem](#)
- [Download Autodesk Inventor Publisher 2011](#)
- [Buy Adobe Photoshop Elements 6 \(en\)](#)
- [9.95\\$ Adobe After Effects CS6 Classroom in a Book cheap oem](#)
- [Buy Adobe Creative Suite 5 Bible \(en\)](#)
- [Discount - Microsoft Windows Server 2003 Enterprise R2 SP2 \(64 bit\)](#)
- [19.95\\$ ZoneAlarm AntiVirus 8 cheap oem](#)
- [Buy Cheap Lynda.com - Joomla! 2.5 Essential Training](#)
- [Discount - Video with Adobe Flash CS4 Professional Studio Techniques](#)
- [Discount - Symantec Winfax Pro 10.4](#)
- [Download Adobe Captivate 3](#)

January 5, 2011

Washington, D.C. – As the 112th Congress gavels in this afternoon, the bipartisan coalition fighting to end secret holds has introduced a resolution to eliminate the undemocratic practice and move the Senate closer to an up-or-down vote on their proposal. U.S. Senators Ron Wyden (D-Ore.), Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa), Claire McCaskill (D-Mo.), and Susan Collins (R-Maine) introduced the Secret Holds Reform Resolution that forces all holds to be disclosed to the public after one day, eliminating the ability of one senator to hijack the legislative process without being held accountable.

“The first day of the new congress is the perfect time to begin making the Senate fairer and more accountable to the public,” Wyden said. **“For too long, secret holds have given one senator the power to grind the legislative process to a halt without any accountability. The bipartisan group of senators standing up against this practice is growing. The tide of reform is moving with us and the Senate must be able to take an up-or-down vote on the merits of secret holds to show who the allies of transparency are and who are the allies of obstruction.”**

“Holds protect the rights of individual senators, but with this power must come public accountability. □ Lack of transparency in the public policy process exacerbates cynicism and distrust. □ Senator Wyden and I have advanced reforms to make holds public for more than 10 years, only to have them undermined by both parties. □ If a senator has a legitimate reason to object to proceeding to a bill or nominee, then he or she ought to have the guts to do so publicly. □ It’s time for each of us to stand up and be accountable to our constituents and our colleagues for any hold placed,” Grassley said.

“The American people don’t trust Washington, and secrecy is one of the reasons,” McCa

Wyden, Grassley, McCaskill, Collins Introduce Resolution to End Secret Holds

Written by Grassley Press

Thursday, 06 January 2011 08:54

skill said.

“If someone is opposed to legislation or a nominee, they should be willing to say it publically. □ We’re here to do the people’s business and they deserve this basic level of transparency.”

“We have a responsibility to assure the American people that the decisions we make are decisions of integrity, in which their interests are put first. □ Placing a hold on a nominee is a legitimate use of Senate rules and can be used to provide additional time to seek answers to important questions and address concerns. □ If Members of Congress are acting in the best interests of their constituents, then they should not hesitate to make public their reasons for placing a particular hold,” said Collins.

Wyden and Grassley have spent more than a decade working to eliminate secret holds and have introduced bills and amendments and secured pledges from both caucuses to no longer honor the practice. However, an amendment to an appropriations bill in 1997 was removed in conference with the House of Representatives and though a 2006 Wyden-Grassley amendment requiring that secret holds be publically disclosed after three legislative days passed the Senate in 2006, it was altered as part of the 2007 “Honest Leadership and Open Government Act” to require disclosure after six days only after a nomination or piece of legislation is called up on the floor. Senator McCaskill brought renewed momentum to the effort last year by drawing attention to the continued abuse of secret holds and authored a letter signed by 68 senators calling for the elimination of the practice.

The three joined forces last summer to introduce the Secret Holds Elimination Act that formed the basis of the current resolution. The resolution will require that all holds on legislation and nominees be submitted in writing and automatically printed in the Congressional Record after one legislative day, whether the bill or nomination has been brought up for floor consideration or not. The latter provision will eliminate the all-too-common practice of secret holds being used to indefinitely prevent bills from reaching the Senate floor.

Here is the text of Grassley’s statement delivered on the Senate floor this afternoon.

Madam President, my colleagues as well as any of the public watching the debate today knows that there's a great partisan divide thus far. Senator Wyden has already referred to the motion that he and I are putting before the Senate, and Senator Wyden being the Democrat and my being a Republican, and we're joined also by Senator McCaskill, the presiding officer right now, as well as Senator Collins in this effort, it is the only bipartisan issue before the Senate this particular day. I emphasize that because I think the public ought to know that not

Wyden, Grassley, McCaskill, Collins Introduce Resolution to End Secret Holds

Written by Grassley Press

Thursday, 06 January 2011 08:54

everything in the Senate is partisan.

Senator Wyden and I have been chipping away at the informal backroom process known as "secret hold" in the Senate. We've been working on this for well over ten years. So it shouldn't surprise anyone that we're back again at the start of another Congress joined as I said by Senator McCaskill of Missouri who was very helpful in our pushing this issue to the forefront at the end of the last congress. As I said, I'm also pleased that we have Senator Collins on board again.

There's been a lot of talk lately about the possibility of far reaching reforms to how the Senate does business that have been hastily conceived and could shift the traditional balance between the rights of the majority and rights of the minority parties. Now, in contrast, our resolution by Senator Wyden and this Senator is neither of those two things. In other words, it does not shift any balance between the majority and the minority.

This resolution is a well-thought-out, bipartisan reform effort that has been the subject of two committee hearings and numerous careful revisions over several years. In no way does it alter the balance of power between the minority and majority parties, nor does it change any rights of any individual senator. This is simply about transparency, and with transparency I think you get a great deal of accountability.

I want to be very clear that I fully support the fundamental right of any individual Senator to withhold his consent when unanimous consent is requested. In the old days, when senators conducted much of their daily business from their desk on the Senate floor and were on the Senate floor for most of the day, it was quite a simple matter for any Senator at that time to stand up and say, "I object" when necessary, if they really objected to a unanimous consent request. And that was it. That stopped it.

Now since most senators spend most of their time off the Senate floor because of the obligations for committee hearings, the obligations for meeting with constituents, and a lot of other obligations that we have, we now tend to rely upon our Majority Leader, in the case of the Democrats, or the Minority Leader in the case of the Republicans, to protect our rights and privileges by asking those leaders or their substitutes to object on our behalf.

Just as any Senator has the right to stand up on the Senate floor and publicly say "I object," it is perfectly legitimate to ask another Senator to object on our behalf if he cannot make it to the

Wyden, Grassley, McCaskill, Collins Introduce Resolution to End Secret Holds

Written by Grassley Press

Thursday, 06 January 2011 08:54

floor when unanimous consent is requested. By the same token, senators have no inherent right to have others object on their behalf while at the same time keeping their identity secret, thus shielding their legislative actions from the public, because that's not transparency, and that's obviously not being accountable.

So, what I object to is not the use of the word "holds" or the process of holding up something in the Senate, but I object to what is called secret holds. So the adjective "secret" is what we're fighting here. If a senator then has a legitimate reason to object to proceedings to a bill or nominee, then he or she ought to have the guts to do so publicly. A Senator may object because he does not agree to the substance of a bill and, therefore, cannot in good conscience grant consent or because a Senator has not had adequate opportunity to review the matter at hand. Regardless, we should have no fear of being held accountable by our constituents if we're acting in their interests, as we're elected to do.

I have practiced publicly announcing my holds for many, many years, and it hasn't hurt one bit. In fact, some of the senators that are most conscientious about protecting their prerogatives to review legislation before granting consent to its consideration or passage are also quite public about it. In short, there is no legitimate reason for any Senator to ever have to, if they place a hold to have that hold be secret.

So, how does our proposal achieve transparency and the resultant accountability? In our proposed standing order for the Majority Leader or Minority Leader to recognize a hold, the Senator placing the hold must get a statement in the record within one session day and must give permission to their leader at the time they place the hold to object in their name, not in the name of the leader. Since the leader will automatically have permission to name the Senator on whose behalf they're objecting, there will no longer be any expectation or pressure on the leader to keep the hold secret. Further, if a Senator objects to a unanimous consent request and does not name another Senator as having the objection, then the objecting Senator will be listed as having the hold. This will end entirely, once and for all, the situation where one Senator objects but is able to remain very, very coy about whether it is their own objection or some unnamed Senator. All objections will have to be owned up to.

Again, our proposal protects the rights of individual senators to withhold their consent while ensuring transparency and public accountability. And, you know, here in the Congress as well as almost any place in the federal government, except maybe national security issues, the public's business always ought to be public, and the people who are involved in the public's business ought to stand behind their actions. As I have repeatedly said, the Senate's business ought to be done more in the public than it is, and most of it is public. But, this secret hold puts

Wyden, Grassley, McCaskill, Collins Introduce Resolution to End Secret Holds

Written by Grassley Press

Thursday, 06 January 2011 08:54

a mystery about things going on in Washington that hurts the credibility of the institution. This principle of accountability and transparency, this is a principle that I think the vast majority, if not all, senators can get behind.

I think the time has come for this simple, commonsense reform.

-30-