they invoke their rights under rule XXII. How do we get over that hurdle?

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, I would say to my friend the people who came before us thought achieving consensus was good, not unanimity, perhaps recognizing it is impossible to get 100 Senators to agree. So I would say to my friend I sometimes am as frustrated as he is when one or two or three or four Senators say: We are going to force this to a cloture vote because we are just not going to agree. I think that is frustrating to all of us, depending on which foot the shoe is on.

But I would say that is a small price to pay, that frustration, to insist on assuring the rights of the minority—again, not because of an individual Senator because we aren't all that important. It is the rights of our constituents whom we represent that are so important, and it is so important we get it right because there is nobody else after we get through who gets to vote. It becomes the law of the land, and unless it is unconstitutional not even the Supreme Court of the United States can set it aside. So it is very important we get it right. I am just saying that we take the time necessary, and I think that is what the rules are designed to provide for.

Mr. HARKIN. Madam President, if the Senator would indulge me for one more moment, so it is not the position of my friend from Texas that everything needs 60 votes in which to move in the Senate; is that correct?

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, there are a long list of bills that pass on a regular basis by unanimous consent, and it is like—we are almost focused on the exception rather than the rule. There are many times—a lot of times; I can't quantify it—where legislation will pass by unanimous consent because it has gone through the committees, people have had an opportunity to offer amendments, both sides have had an opportunity to contribute to it, and then it passes without objection. Again, I can't quantify that, but the ones we seem to be focused on are the ones that seem to be more or less the exception to the rule where there are genuine disagreements, when there is a need to have a more fulsome debate and the opportunity for amendments.

So I think the current rules serve the interests of our constituents and the American people well.

I thank the Chair and I thank my colleague.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. WYDEN. Madam President, Senator UDALL and Senator MERKLEY have waited at great length to make their remarks. I wish to propound a unanimous consent at this time. At this point, Senator UDALL would be the next speaker. There would be a Republican who would speak next. I am very hopeful it will be Senator GRASSLEY because he and I have been partners for almost 14 years in this effort to force the Senate to do public business in public and get rid of these secret holds. So after Senator UDALL, there would be Senator GRASSLEY. After Senator GRASSLEY, there would be my friend and colleague Senator MERKLEY who would speak. At that time there would be a Republican who would be next in the queue to speak.

So my unanimous consent request at that point is—I would like to be able, for up to 30 minutes, to have the bipartisan sponsors of the effort to get rid of secret holds once and for all, including the distinguished Presiding Officer, to have up to 30 minutes for a colloquy on this bipartisan effort to eliminate secret holds.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any time limits on the UC motion for any Senators other than the 30 minutes designated for the cosponsors of the secret hold legislation?

The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Madam President, in addition to his UC, we have myself for 15 minutes, Senator MERKLEY for 15 minutes, and I believe Senator WYDEN has asked for 30, and then to accommodate the Republicans, our UC would say if there is a Republican seeking recognition that we alternate between the two sides and they be under the same time limitations as listed above. So Senator ALEXANDER can see I would speak for 15, and then he would have a block for 15, and then Senator MERKLEY, and then it would be 30 for Senator WYDEN.

Mr. WYDEN. Then, after Senator MERKLEY, there would be another Republican who would be in a position to speak for 15 minutes, and at that point under the unanimous consent request we would be able to discuss this bipartisan effort to eliminate secret holds for up to 30 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. HARKIN. Madam President, I wonder if the Senator would mind a slight modification to that. One of the things I thought we were kind of getting into today were colloquies wherein we could ask a question and have a response in a reasonable manner. I would ask to modify the unanimous consent request to say that any colloquies entered into—questions propounded to a Senator through the Chair—not be detracted from the time allotted to that Senator.

Mr. WYDEN. I am very open to that. I think it is an excellent suggestion.

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. I very much agree with that. I have been sitting here following the debate, and I think Senator ALEXANDER, among others, has propounded some very good questions. I actually have another question I was going to ask on top of his question of what is a filibuster. So I am looking forward to that portion of it. Senator HARKIN, thank you very much for that.

Mr. WYDEN. Madam President, I think Senator HARKIN has made an excellent suggestion. Unless Senator ALEXANDER or anyone on the other side has a problem with that, let's modify the unanimous consent request I have made to incorporate Senator HARKIN's suggestion.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from New Mexico.

AMENDING SENATE RULES

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Madam President, I submit on behalf of myself and Senators HARKIN, MERKLEY, DURBIN, KLOBUCHAR, BROWN, BEGICH, BLUMENTHAL, GILLIBRAND, SHAHEEN, BOXER, TESTER, CARDIN, MIKULSKI, WARNER, and MANCHIN a resolution to amend rule VIII and rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, and I ask unanimous consent to proceed to the immediate consideration of the resolution.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. ALEXANDER. Madam President, reserving the right to object, I have had a number of discussions with the Senator from New Mexico and the Senator from Oregon. I respect their proposals and will have more to say about them, but I think since they have waited such a long time to make their presentations I will merely state my objection now and have more to say later. So I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection having been heard, the resolution will go over under the rule.

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Madam President, let me just inquire through the Parliamentarian, it is my understanding that by objecting to this resolution being immediately considered now, the result is the resolution will go over under the rule, allowing it to be available to be brought up at a future time. Is that understanding correct?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. That is correct.

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Thank you very much.

Madam President, I rise today to introduce the resolution I just mentioned. I have worked very hard with all of my colleagues, including my two colleagues from Iowa and Oregon, Senators HARKIN and MERKLEY, to reform the rules of this unique and prestigious body. I do so after coming to the floor last January—January 25, in fact, now almost 1 year ago—to issue a warning, a warning because of partisan rancor and the Senate's own incapacitating rules, that this body was failing to represent the best interests of the American people. The unprecedented abuse of the filibuster, of secret holds, and of other procedural tactics routinely prevent the Senate from getting its work done. It prevents us from doing the job the American people sent us here to do.

Since that day in January things haven't gotten better. In fact, I would