



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on December 15, 2010

Republicans Threaten to Delay Other Significant Legislation

While the Senate is undergoing significant deliberation proceedings regarding the tax cut bill, Senate Democrats indicate that they have not forgotten about the U.S.-Russia Nuclear Arms Treaty, START. Much to the chagrin of Senate Democrats, however, Republicans are threatening to delay proceedings on the Treaty, as well as other pieces of legislation.



Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell reiterated the Republican stance that the two most important issues awaiting the Senate are the tax cuts and government funding. All else, he asserts, can wait until the 112th session of Congress, including the START Treaty.

Senator Jim DeMint will see to that, apparently.

[The Hill](#) reports, Sen. Jim DeMint (R-S.C.) will force readings of both a nuclear arms treaty and \$1.1 trillion spending bill that could eat up hours of the remaining lame-duck Congress.

DeMint will make use of a senatorial privilege that allows him to request that the texts of both bills be read aloud.

A spokesman for DeMint estimates that the reading of the START Treaty could take up to 12 hours, while that of the omnibus bill could last as long as 60 hours.

[The Hill](#) explains, Floor readings of measures before the Senate are typically waived by unanimous consent without any objections. But if a senator were to require that the lengthy bills be read, the delay could take hours. (The omnibus is over 1,900 pages.)

Last year, Senator Tom Coburn forced an extension of the lame-duck session by requesting a lengthy reading of an amendment to the healthcare bill that ultimately prompted the withdrawal of the amendment.

Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid calls DeMint's proposal a colossal waste of time.

Nevertheless, forcing a reading of the Treaty could prohibit its passage as the Senate has scheduled a vote on the treaty to follow that on the tax legislation.

The readings could also inhibit further action on a legislative repeal of Don't Ask, Don't Tell and the DREAM Act.

DeMint's request has earned the support of former House Speaker Newt Gingrich, who remarked on Twitter, Senator DeMint is right to demand the reading of the 2,000 page earmark filled spending bill. Senate GOP should stop the bill.



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The lame-duck session had been scheduled to end on Friday, December 17. In an effort to avoid a repeat of last year, Senator Reid hoped to avoid working during the week of the Christmas holiday, but with so much legislation awaiting votes, Reid now threatens to extend the session.

Reid said, I want to get out of here just as soon as we can, but were not going to walk away from any of the work that we have to do.

According to Senator Reid, he has the necessary 67 votes to ratify the treaty. However, Republican Senator Jon Kyl, along with several Republicans, has led the opposition against START. Senator Jon Kyl of Arizona told [CNN](#) that it would be a big mistake to begin debate on the treaty.

Kyl asserts, I've given Majority leader Reid my best judgment as to what the situation is and why it would be a mistake to bring it up.

If the START Treaty is not ratified during this session of Congress, chance for passage diminishes significantly as the new Congress would require 14 Republican votes to ratify the treaty.

As a result, White House Press Secretary Robert Gibbs states that Congress will remain in session until it is ratified.

A recent *Washington Post* editorial revealed support of the TREATY from five establishment Republicans Henry Kissinger, George Schultz, James Baker, Lawrence Eagleburger, and Colin Powell. According to the supporters, the treaty is clearly in our national interest.

Reid has indicated that the Senate will take up the START Treaty, government spending resolution, the DREAM Act, and a repeal of Don't Ask, Don't Tell before the end of the lame duck session.

CNN writes, He warned Republicans he would keep the Senate in session for as long as it takes, including up to and even beyond Christmas, in order to take up the measures before the end of the current lame-duck session of Congress.

Senate Republicans contend that rushing through important pieces of legislation like those indicated by Reid would prevent the proper amount of consideration on the bills before passage.

Senator McConnell asserts that in particular, the continuing resolution should not be rammed through Congress without proper deliberation and proposes extending government spending at the current levels for a few short months until the new Congress takes up further spending legislation.

A new session of Congress, which will have a far greater Republican presence, is scheduled to begin on January 4.

Photo: Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell of Ky., center, gestures during a news conference on Capitol Hill in Washington Tuesday, Dec.

14, 2010: AP Images



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