

In the summer of 2021, the House of Representatives passed a bill on election reform with overwhelming support from Democrats and no Republican votes. When the same legislation was discussed in the Senate later on in the year, the Democrats had a majority to pass the bill but could not obtain enough Republican votes to end the debate. As long as debate continued, there could be no final vote on the legislation. As a result, the bill did not become law, despite having the minimum number of supporters to win a floor vote if one were to be held.

Disappointed by the outcome, some of the bill's supporters suggested that the problem was not the legislation but the rules of the Senate. Groups pressured the Senate leadership to consider revising the rules to make it easier for the chamber to pass legislation, similar to the rules currently in place in the House of Representatives.

Opinions on changing the Senate rules varied. Some Republican and Democratic senators supported the rule change. Others in both parties opposed it, voicing concerns about the long-term consequences of changing the rules. One senator noted that because any party could be in the minority in the future, any changes to the rules should still ensure that all senators continue to have input.

1. Respond to parts A, B, and C.

- A.** Describe the Senate procedure at the center of the controversy in the scenario.
- B.** Explain how the procedure described in part A makes passing legislation more difficult in the Senate compared with the House of Representatives.
- C.** Explain how the senators' actions in addressing the election reform bill illustrate the concept of partisanship.