

## Learning about Legislation #31: Unanimous Consent

This week Sen. Jeff Flake (R-Ariz.) attempted to bring a resolution he wrote with Sen. Chris Coons (D-Del.) to the floor, bypassing the committee process. The resolution dealt with a response to President Trump's behavior at the Helsinki summit with Russian President Putin, so timeliness was of the essence. He asked for unanimous consent to bring the resolution directly to the floor of the Senate for a vote.

The Senate's [website glossary](#) defines unanimous consent as follows:

A senator may request unanimous consent on the floor to set aside a specified rule of procedure so as to expedite proceedings. If no Senator objects, the Senate permits the action, but if any one senator objects, the request is rejected. Unanimous consent requests with only immediate effects are routinely granted, but ones affecting the floor schedule, the conditions of considering a bill or other business, or the rights of other senators, are normally not offered, or a floor leader will object to it, until all senators concerned have had an opportunity to inform the leaders that they find it acceptable.

As described in the "Votes of Interest" section above, Sen. John Cornyn (R-Texas) did object to this maneuver, so the resolution could not come up for a vote, and was sent back to the committee process.