

(Neb.)-Filibuster Or Not? GOP Slow-Walks Hagel Nomination

By: Roxie Graham-Marski Posted at: 02/15/2013 08:32 AM

Photo: Chuck Hagel

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WASHINGTON (AP) - Immediately after blocking Chuck Hagel's nomination to be secretary of defense, top Republicans took to the Senate floor to claim that, no, they were not filibustering. They just need more time.

A filibuster occurs when a minority of the Senate declines to vote to invoke what's called "cloture," which sets a deadline to complete debate on a nomination or a bill and forces an up or down vote. It takes 60 votes in the 100-member Senate to obtain cloture.

But to Democrats, Thursday's vote to deny cloture on Hagel's nomination was a historic, first-ever successful filibuster of a Cabinet nominee and the first time the party in the Senate's minority ever had even tried the move against a defense secretary nominee.