Democrats controlling the Senate have changed the rules, barring use of filibuster to block President Barack Obama's nominees.
Transcript

Senate Democrats Take "Nuclear Option" on Filibusters

BRIAN WILLIAMS, anchor:

Also in Washington, we've all heard of majority rule but that hasn’t always been the rule in the U.S. Senate. For about a generation, in fact, 51 out of 100 votes doesn’t win all votes. When the President is trying to get a nominee through, it takes 60, or at least it used to. Today the Democrats who control the Senate changed the rules of the Senate. And in the near future it will allow more Obama nominees for things like federal judgeships to get through without a fight. Both parties have complained about the 60 vote rule, and while this change doesn’t mean bills will pass because the GOP controls the House, it is called the nuclear option for good reason and feelings are hot once again beneath the Capitol dome tonight. To our Chief White House Correspondent and political director Chuck Todd. And, Chuck, people are asking, they didn’t know it could actually get worse in Washington, it appears to today.

CHUCK TODD, reporting:

It has. And this is-- look, this has been brewing for a decade. You know, there was a time when a Senator Obama objected to Republican plans to change the rules to help President Bush get nominees through without a filibuster. Well, now it’s President Obama praising Senate Democrats for doing this, and it’s now Senate Republicans complaining. But as you just spelled out very-- very well, the-- the Senate Democrats changed these rules, and what it’s going to lead to now is probably more acrimony. Essentially, what Senate Republicans said today to Harry Reid is like, okay, congratulations, you’ve changed the rules. Wait until there is a Republican President and that Republicans become in charge in the Senate. Because, guess what, they may change the rules on legislation, and they may change the rules on Supreme Court nominees. And there will be a whole lot of people like Clarence Thomas and more Clarence Thomases on there. So, Brian, this is going to lead to partisan fighting.