

Everett McKinley Dirksen
Illinois

Edna

United States Senate
Minority Leader

CLOTURE

May 20, 1964

Dear :

The Senate Rule on cloture provides that sixteen members can sign a petition asking for a termination of debate on a pending measure. After one intervening day after the petition is filed, it becomes mandatory for the President of the Senate to lay it before the membership for a record vote. It requires two-thirds of the members present and voting in order to effectuate cloture.

If the Senate so determines, each member may have one hour and no more for debate and for consideration of any qualified amendments which he may have offered and at the end of that time the measure before the Senate is then disposed.

This is a Senate rule and has been liberalized somewhat over the years so that as a legislative body it is not completely immobilized. If and when it appears that no other course is open to secure a disposition of the pending civil rights legislation, it would appear imperative to me that the Senate adopt cloture in order to go forward with the nation's business.

Sincerely,

Everett McKinley Dirksen