



Senate Dems block trafficking bill for second day



By Jordain Carney - 03/18/15 05:03 PM EDT

Democrats for a second day in a row on Wednesday blocked the Senate from moving forward on an anti-trafficking bill over their opposition to language in the legislation that would stop federal funding for abortions.

Senators voted 57-41 to move forward in the procedural vote, but 60 votes were needed.

Sens. Bob Casey (D-Pa.), Joe Donnelly (D-Ind.), Heidi Heitkamp (D-N.D.) and Joe Manchin (D-W.Va.) broke from the Democratic filibuster and voted with Republicans to move forward on the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act. The four also voted with Republicans Tuesday.

Democrats have warned they will hold up the legislation unless the Hyde Amendment, which prohibits the use of federal funding for abortion, is removed from the bill.

Senate Minority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.) said earlier Wednesday that the repeated votes are "insane."

"It's insane to keep going forward on these votes that everyone knows are going to turn out the same way," he said.

Senators are expected to vote again on the anti-trafficking bill again Thursday.

Democrats say Republicans misled them over whether or not the abortion provision would be included in the bill.

Republicans say Democrats either failed to read the legislation before it passed unanimously out of the Judiciary Committee, or are trying to pick a political fight on abortion.

If every Republican votes to move forward on the legislation, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) will need to get two more Democratic votes to move forward on the legislation.

TAGS: Harry Reid, Trafficking bill, Abortion