

Late last year, [I spoke on the Senate floor](#) regarding the recent filibuster by Senate Republicans to block my legislation to establish a bipartisan National Criminal Justice Commission, though it enjoys support from more than 100 organizations including the National Sheriffs' Association, the Fraternal Order of Police, the ACLU, the U.S. Conference of Mayors, and the Sentencing Project.

At first I was stunned at the filibuster at the hands of all but four of the Senate Republicans, who blocked common-sense legislation that would have created a national commission designed to bring together some of the best minds in America to examine our broken and frequently dysfunctional criminal justice system, and to make recommendations as to how we can make it more effective, more fair, and more cost-efficient.

But on the other hand, it is impossible not to notice, over the past two years, the regrettable decline in bipartisan behavior in the U.S. Senate, even in tackling serious issues of actual governance.

For nearly two years our legislative process has too often become sidetracked by what can only be termed an indiscriminate obstructionism. A lot of good ideas have fallen by the wayside, having become hostages in the larger debate about who should comprise our national leadership and how we should solve long-term problems such as our fiscal crisis.

Nowhere is the need to think creatively for the good of the country more clear than where it affects our dysfunctional criminal justice system, whose challenges threaten the safety and the well-being of every single community and every single American. This system will not be fixed by sticking our heads in the sand and pretending not to see its failings. It will only be fixed by bringing together good minds who have dedicated years of thought and action to finding the answers.

Blocking a common-sense measure that might assist this nation in resolving the national disgrace that now comprises our criminal justice system is a sad metaphor for the obstructionism that is too frequently replacing common sense leadership in our national debate.

[As I have said before](#): We will not back down. We will keep fighting. People in this country are looking for leadership. And obstructionism is not leadership. We will continue to pursue this effort.

*Read recent Sunday editorials on my National Criminal Justice Commission Act from The Washington Post [here](#) and The New York Times [here](#).*

*YouTube video of Senator Webb's recent Senate floor remarks can be found [here](#).*