



Written by [R. Cort Kirkwood](#) on October 5, 2018

Kavanaugh Survives Cloture Vote; Confirmation Vote Tomorrow

The last-minute smear campaign to wreck the career and good name of Brett Kavanaugh has thus far failed to derail the Supreme Court nominee, and it failed again on a vote this morning.

[The U.S. Senate voted 51-49](#) to invoke cloture, meaning to limit debate on Kavanaugh's move to the high court. The successful cloture vote sets up a confirmation vote tomorrow.



This morning's vote comes after the [FBI handed the Senate](#) yet another probe of Kavanaugh, this one seeking evidence for murky claims of sex crimes. Christine Blasey Ford, a psychologist in Palo Alto, California, fired an accusation of attempted rape, while another, college classmate Debbie Ramirez, claims Kavanaugh exposed himself to her at a party.

The two women leveled the charges after it became clear the federal appeals judge was headed for the high court, having survived a barrage of lies and hostile questions from Democrats during the Senate Judiciary Committee's confirmation hearings.

[A third woman lodged](#) utterly preposterous and [ultimately discredited claims](#) that Kavanaugh was a gang rapist in high school.

The Vote

The successful vote hinged on three key Republicans, two of them pro-abortion women: Senators Jeff Flake of Arizona, Lisa Murkowski of Alaska, and Susan Collins of Maine. The other key vote was Joe Manchin, a relatively conservative Democrat from a Trump-state, West Virginia.

Flake, Collins, and Manchin voted for cloture. Murkowski voted no.

Flake had announced he would vote for Kavanaugh, but after hearing from the judge and Ford at the hearing on September 27, caved to Democratic demands for a week-long delay so the FBI could investigate again.

[That report landed](#) on Capitol Hill two days ago, and having read it, [Flake said](#) "we've seen no additional corroborating information."

Collins had said likewise, and even though she voted for cloture, she did not say she will vote to confirm: "I will announce my intentions on how to vote later today," [she told](#) the media.

Last anyone knew, Murkowski was "uncertain," as the [Anchorage Daily News put it](#). Murkowski did tell



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a reporter for Bloomberg that “she concurs with Susan Collins’ view that Kavanaugh probably wouldn’t overturn Roe.”

But then the liberal Alaskan voted with the anti-Kavanaugh smear bund, and may well vote that way again tomorrow.

Apparently, she didn’t listen to Judiciary Committee Chairman Chuck Grassley, [who called](#) the Democrats’ treatment of Kavanaugh “nothing short of monstrous,” and said that the “conduct of left-wing dark money groups and allies in this body have shamed us all.”

Noting that Democrats said they would oppose Kavanaugh before he was nominated, [Grassley said](#) the Democrats’ “playbook remains the same” as it was when they wrecked the nomination of Robert Bork.

“We had a campaign of distraction from his outstanding qualifications, a campaign of destruction of this individual,” Grassley said. “What we have learned is the resistance that has existed since the day after the November 2016 election is centered right here on Capitol Hill. They have encouraged mob rule.”

Concluded Grassley, “I hope we can say no to mob rule.”

Last night, [Grassley again demanded](#), apparently to no avail, the evidence that Ford’s attorneys say they possess that would corroborate her murky tale.

Tomorrow’s Vote

The victory for Kavanaugh means he has just one step to go before he lands on the court: a confirmation vote Saturday given that a cloture vote limits debate to 30 hours.

The question is whether Kavanaugh can hold on to the 51 votes he has, and perhaps add Murkowski. But that is by no means certain. [Flake proved](#) he was a weak sister when he caved to Democrats and agreed to the FBI probe, which produced a report [they immediately denounced](#) as insufficient.

Collins might turn tail and run this afternoon. And Murkowski is an all-but-certain vote for what Grassley termed “mob rule.”

Manchin might well be the vote that decides it. He faces reelection next month, and his state voted Trump.

One complicating factor is Senator Steve Daines of Montana. The pro-Kavanaugh Republican [will attend](#) his daughter’s wedding tomorrow. That might mean Majority Leader Mitch McConnell will hold the vote open until he returns.

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