

2/7/2005
The President submits his budget proposal to Congress

3/11/05
House Budget Committee submits its budget resolution

House floor votes

passed 3/18

Budget Conference Committee develops joint budget resolution

House floor votes

passed 4/28

Concurrent Budget resolution reached

we are here

Reconciliation

During the reconciliation process, individual committees are given instructions to reduce their program spending by a specific percentage or dollar amount.

The committees return their proposed cuts to the Budget Committee, which packages the reconciliation language into one omnibus bill for consideration by the two chambers

House floor votes

if it passes

Signed or Vetoed by the President

Senate floor votes

passed 3/17

3/11/05 Senate Budget Committee submits its budget resolution

Senate floor votes

passed 4/28

Senate floor votes

if it passes

if it fails

The President's nonbinding Budget Proposal included the recommendation to open the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to drilling.

The House Budget Resolution did not contain drilling language. The Senate Resolution did, through reconciliation instructions to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources. (see explanation of reconciliation to the right)

Senate Budget Committee Member Russ Feingold (D-WI) presented an amendment in committee to strike the drilling language from the resolution before it reached the floor of the Senate. The amendment failed 10-12, on a strict party line vote.

Senator Maria Cantwell (D-WA) offered an amendment on the Senate floor to strike the assumed drilling revenues from the Budget Resolution. The amendment failed 49-51. The Senate resolution then passed 51-49, with the \$2.4 billion in revenues from Arctic drilling still intact.

The House's Budget Resolution passed 218-214. It did not include Arctic drilling revenues.

Conferees were chosen from each of the two Chambers to draft a single Budget which combined the two separate Budget Resolutions. The Conference Report then moved back to both Chambers for final approval.

The \$2.6 trillion dollar budget passed in the House 214-211 and in the Senate 52-47. Though the bill does not explicitly mention the Refuge, it contains reconciliation instructions of \$2.4 billion-- almost exactly the federal share of the the administration's unrealistic leasing projections for the Refuge-- to the House Resources and Senate Energy Committees.

Chairmen of committees which have recieved reconciliation instructions have the option of increasing revenues rather than reducing spending. House Resources Chairman Richard Pombo (R-CA) and Senate Energy Chairman Pete Domenici (R-NM) have both been quoted in the past saying that they would use such an opportunity to open the Arctic Refuge for drilling.

This last stage of review before the final vote allows us yet another opportunity to present an amendment to strike Arctic drilling from the Budget before it is passed into law. Unlike most pieces of legislation, the Budget cannot be filibustered; it will be decided on a simple majority vote.

