

## **Dodd Filibuster Threat Wins; Spying Bill Postponed to Next Year**

**By Ryan Singel** 

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**Connecticut senator Christopher Dodd's threatened filibuster of a bill giving immunity to telecoms that helped the government spy on Americans unexpectedly carried the day Monday, as Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid decided to postpone the vote on the measure until after the winter break.**

**The announcement was an unexpected victory for civil liberties groups, whose anti-immunity fortunes looked grim this morning as the Senate looked primed to pass an expansive spying bill that would free telecoms like AT&T and Verizon from privacy lawsuits.**

**Dodd showed his moxie and determination all day, as he held the floor for long stretches, railing against an administration-backed bill that would have freed telecoms from 40-odd lawsuits pending against them in federal court.**

**The presidential candidate threatened to filibuster and hold the Senate floor if the Senate shot down his amendment to strip immunity from the bill. That threat moved Reid to postpone a vote on the bill, so that the Senate could take up war funding bills, a massive domestic spending bill and changes to the Alternative Minimum Tax before the winter break. Dodd's determination to fight telecom immunity also boosted his lagging presidential campaign.**

**Dodd spent nearly 10 hours on the Senate floor Monday, assaulting the administration's secret warrantless wiretapping program and channeling Senator Frank Church, whose investigation in the 1970s of the nation's intelligence services clandestine led to Congressional limits on government spying.**

**Those limits, which included the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, will be loosened by all of the spying bills moving through Congress.**

**After Reid's announcement on Monday night, Dodd took to the floor again, thanking Reid for not invoking procedural moves to stop him from speaking at length today.**

**"I felt so strongly about this issue I was determined to do everything in my power to stop it," Dodd said. "I am grateful we are moving on to other issues and that we will return to this matter in January. My hope is between now and then we can resolve this matter. If it's not I'll be back here opposing those provisions giving immunity."**

