

WAS IT HER COLLEAGUES, OR HER CONSTITUENTS?

As Jane reported last night, our presidential candidates have decided to return to DC to exercise their vote, if not to lead.

I'm glad to have them, though I agree with Tim Tagaris that we could sure use their help on Tuesday and Wednesday and Thursday, as well as today.

I'm curious, though, about one thing. On Friday, here's what Hillary told Matt Stoller about this vote:

Then I spoke with Hillary, and she said she has assured her colleagues she will go back to the Senate if they need her vote.

As was perfectly clear at that point, you don't need votes to defeat a cloture vote—you just need to make sure your opponent doesn't get the requisite 60 votes.

So what convinced Hillary to return and cast a vote that, I'm sure, her Republican opponents will find some way to attack (speaking of which, McCain is blowing off the SOTU, presumably to avoid committing one way or another to this vote)? Was it a slew of faxes sent to her campaign office, finally persuading her that missing this vote will be like flip-flopping on an \$87 billion Iraq appropriation? Did someone decide that we might have a shot at reaching cloture on the House version of FISA, RESTORE, which should have a cloture vote immediately following the Rockefeller-Bond bill (I doubt that highly—I suspect this cloture vote is Reid's attempt to prove that RESTORE is no likelier to pass than the Rockefeller-Bond bill [oops, I confused what the cloture vote is on—it's on the extension of PAA])? Are we at

risk of failing to defeat cloture, and Hillary wanted to make sure her vote was registered? Or did Hillary just remember she had a day job?

[Speaking of which, I'm actually in DC hanging around the Senate today, though I doubt they'll let me vote in the cloture vote, or even see it any more closely than you can on CSPAN. Posting may be either light or heavy—who knows?]