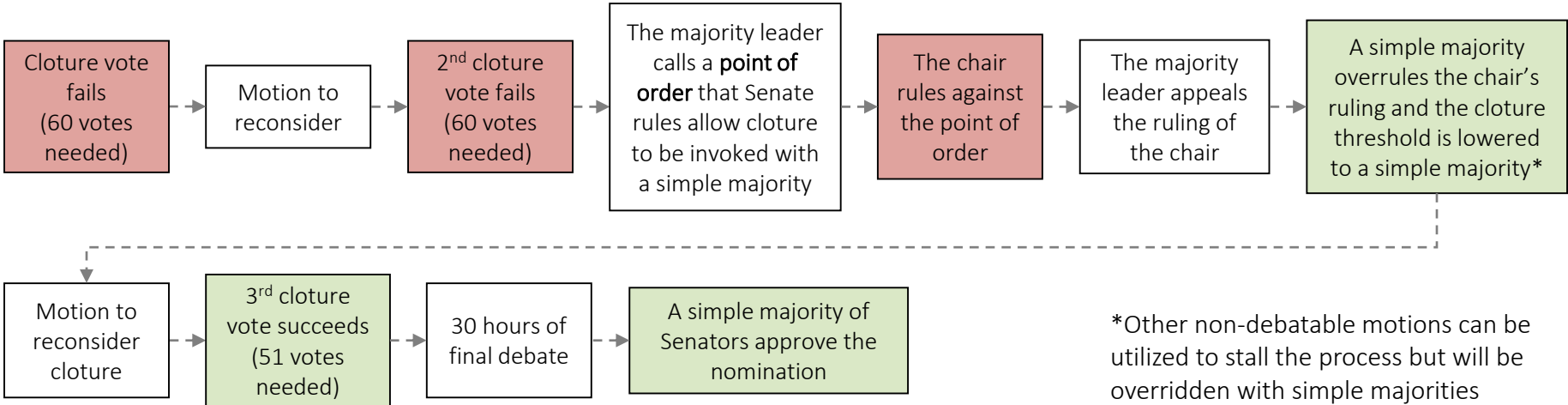


# The nuclear option changes cloture rules with a simple majority

## Steps to triggering the nuclear option for nominations



### Analysis

- On April 6, 2017, Senate Republicans invoked the nuclear option, **reducing the cloture threshold to a simple majority for Supreme Court nominees**, but leaving the cloture threshold for legislation at three-fifths
- Cloture, the process to limit debate in the Senate, was established by U.S. Senate Standing Rule XXII
- In 1975, the Senate reduced the number of votes necessary to invoke cloture from two-thirds to three-fifths (changes to Senate Standing Rules still require two-thirds vote)
- In November 2013, Senate Democrats invoked the nuclear option, reducing the cloture threshold to a simple majority for judicial and executive branch nominees, except nominees to the Supreme Court

Source: U.S. Senate Reference, 2013; Erin Kelly, "Here are 9 steps the Senate may take to 'go nuclear' and approve Gorsuch, April 3, 2017.