Term Limits

The President has a term limit. Why not Congress?

By Tom Pryor
“All power tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely.”
~Lord Acton
Questions I will attempt to answer today:

1. What did the Founding Fathers think about term limits?
2. What are 8 reasons Americans are dissatisfied with Congress?
3. What is a term limit?
4. What are the Pro’s and Con’s of Congressional term limits?
5. What are three options to achieve a term limit?
6. What does Article 5 of the Constitution have to do with term limits?
7. What are the next steps?
I believe members of the House and Senate *smell* after three terms in office.

Guests, like fish, begin to smell after three days.

~ Benjamin Franklin
Senator Chuck Grassley has served 43 years, not 12. Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi has served 36 years, not 6.
Did the founding fathers intend for America to have career politicians?

“The founders never thought of public service as a fulltime "career," as you and I would think of that concept, because they never saw public service as something that should be your main source of income. That is, they generally believed (which was a very English concept) that "gentlemen" who already had means enough to support themselves should hold higher office, because if they were wealthy enough to do so they would not be corrupted by trying to make a living from public office AND, therefore, they could make proper decisions for the betterment and welfare of those less fortunate than themselves.” Prof. Andrew Torget PhD
Only 15% of Americans approve of Congress!
Being the low-trust option should be embarrassing.
## Broad public support for term limits for Congress, age limits for federal elected officials and Supreme Court

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proposal</th>
<th>Oppose</th>
<th>Favor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Limiting the number of terms that members of Congress can serve</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Putting a maximum age limit in place for elected officials in Washington, D.C.</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Requiring all voters to show government-issued photo identification to vote</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Putting a maximum age limit in place for Supreme Court justices</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Automatically registering all eligible citizens to vote</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increasing the number of justices on the Supreme Court</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: No answer responses not shown.
“Americans’ Dismal Views of the Nation’s Politics”

PEW RESEARCH CENTER
Why are citizens dissatisfied with Congress?

- Congress is too big.
- Members don’t compromise.
Why are citizens dissatisfied with Congress?

- Congress is too big.
- Members don’t compromise.
- They don’t get anything done.
- They are overpaid.
- They spend 50%+ of their time raising contributions.
- They are not very responsive.
- They don’t answer questions.
- They won’t balance the budget.
"I can fix the $32 trillion US debt problem in 5 minutes. You pass a law that when there’s a deficit of more than 3% of GDP, all sitting members congress are ineligible for re-election.” - Warren Buffett
What is the solution to all of these problems?

Term limits.
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3. **What is a term limit?**
4. What are the Pro’s and Con’s of Congressional term limits?
5. What are three options to achieve a term limit?
6. What does Article 5 of the Constitution have to do with term limits?
7. What are the next steps?
What is meant by Term Limits?

- The only term limit today is the 22\textsuperscript{nd} Amendment to the Constitution which limits a person to no more than two terms of 4 years as President.
- Most proponents of term limits for Congress support a maximum of two 6-year terms for a senator and three 2-year terms for the House of Representatives.
- I personally prefer one 8-year term for senators with one senator elected every four years in each state.
- I prefer one 6-year term for House members with half of each state elected every three years.
- Having one longer term would eliminate reelectsions and take some money out of politics.
Pros for Limits

- Majority of voters prefer term limits
- Stops seniority for congressmen
- Increases competition for new, talented individuals
- Takes away “career politicians”
- Breaks lobbying and special interests
- More voting on the right thing to do for the country
- Enhances fresh ideas and thinking
Cons for Term Limits

• Terminates “good” politicians along with the “bad”.
• Loss of knowledge and experience.
• Staff and lobbyists will continue writing most legislation.
• Elections may become more expensive.
• Former members will continue being lobbyists.
• Does nothing to limit influence of special interests.
• Encourages “lame duck-ism”.

What impact could a 12-year term limit have on the current U.S. Senate?

- 44 of the current 100 senators who have served for more than 12 years would be replaced.
- The leadership of both the Democrats (Chuck Schumer - 29 years) and Republicans (Mitch McConnell – 39 years) would not be in power.
Term limits would cure both senility and seniority- both terrible legislative diseases.

— Harry S. Truman —
“As long as the seniority system is in place, politicians will hold on to office as long as possible. Term limits would be a huge step toward a meritocracy on Capitol Hill.”
Senator Tuberville (R-Alabama)
What impact could a 6-year term limit have on the current House of Representatives?

- The average tenure of the current 435 representatives is 9 years.
  - Nancy Pelosi (D) – 36 years
  - Hal Rogers (R) – 43 years

- 189 (43%) of the current 435 reps have served for 6 or more years.
  - Chris Smith (R) – 43 years
  - Steny Hoyer (D) – 42 years
Lobbyist don’t want term limits.

Two out of three people disapprove of the job Congress is doing. Who’s the third person?

Beats me.
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5. **What are three options to achieve a term limit?**
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7. What are the next steps?
Three options to get rid of career politicians:

1. Elect new people to Congress.
Americans are dissatisfied with Congress BUT we continue to reelect the people we don’t like.
Three options to get rid of career politicians:

1. Elect new people to Congress.
2. Have Congress pass a term limits amendment.
Out of the 10 promises, only 1 was not kept.

290 votes in the House were needed in 1995 to pass term limits of 12 years in the House and 12 years in the Senate.

The final vote was only 227 so the measure failed.

Interestingly, 38 Democrats voted for term limits but 40 republicans voted no.
The new Speaker of the House supports Term Limits
17 Republicans on the Judiciary Committee voted for a Term Limits bill in 2024.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Name</th>
<th>Last Name</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Date Assumed Office</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Benjamin</td>
<td>Cline</td>
<td>VA</td>
<td>REP</td>
<td>1/1/2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lance</td>
<td>Gooden</td>
<td>TX</td>
<td>REP</td>
<td>1/1/2019</td>
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<td>Jeff</td>
<td>Van Drew</td>
<td>NJ</td>
<td>REP</td>
<td>1/1/2019</td>
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<td>James</td>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td>OH</td>
<td>REP</td>
<td>1/1/2007</td>
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<td>Kevin</td>
<td>Kiley</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>REP</td>
<td>1/3/2023</td>
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<td>Russell</td>
<td>Fry</td>
<td>SC</td>
<td>REP</td>
<td>1/3/2023</td>
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<td>Matt</td>
<td>Gaetz</td>
<td>FL</td>
<td>REP</td>
<td>1/1/2017</td>
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<td>James</td>
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<td>REP</td>
<td>1/1/2017</td>
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<td>Spartz</td>
<td>IN</td>
<td>REP</td>
<td>1/1/2021</td>
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<td>Tiffany</td>
<td>WI</td>
<td>REP</td>
<td>1/1/2020</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chip</td>
<td>Roy</td>
<td>TX</td>
<td>REP</td>
<td>1/1/2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cliff</td>
<td>Bentz</td>
<td>OR</td>
<td>REP</td>
<td>1/1/2021</td>
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<td>Felix</td>
<td>Moore</td>
<td>AL</td>
<td>REP</td>
<td>1/1/2021</td>
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<td>Troy</td>
<td>Nehls</td>
<td>TX</td>
<td>REP</td>
<td>1/1/2021</td>
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<td>Thomas</td>
<td>Massie</td>
<td>KY</td>
<td>REP</td>
<td>1/1/2012</td>
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<td>Laurel</td>
<td>Lee</td>
<td>FL</td>
<td>REP</td>
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<tr>
<td>James</td>
<td>Bishop</td>
<td>NC</td>
<td>REP</td>
<td>1/1/2019</td>
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</table>
19 Republicans & Democrats voted down the Term Limits bill in 2024.

Here is a listing with party affiliation along with the year they entered office.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Voted Against HJR 11</th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Harriet Hageman</td>
<td>WY</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jerrold Nadler</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>DEM</td>
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<td>Mary Scanlon</td>
<td>PA</td>
<td>DEM</td>
<td>1/1/2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sheila Jackson Lee</td>
<td>TX</td>
<td>DEM</td>
<td>1/1/1995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veronica Escobar</td>
<td>TX</td>
<td>DEM</td>
<td>1/1/2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steve Cohen</td>
<td>TN</td>
<td>DEM</td>
<td>1/1/2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lou Correa</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>DEM</td>
<td>1/1/2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darrell Issa</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>REP</td>
<td>1/1/2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zoe Lofgren</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>DEM</td>
<td>1/1/1995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glenn Ivey</td>
<td>MD</td>
<td>DEM</td>
<td>1/3/2023</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rebecca Balint</td>
<td>VT</td>
<td>DEM</td>
<td>1/3/2023</td>
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<tr>
<td>Joseph Neguse</td>
<td>CO</td>
<td>DEM</td>
<td>1/1/2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adam Schiff</td>
<td>DC</td>
<td>DEM</td>
<td>1/1/2001</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eric Swalwell</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>DEM</td>
<td>1/1/2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scott Fitzgerald</td>
<td>WI</td>
<td>REP</td>
<td>1/1/2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henry Johnson</td>
<td>GA</td>
<td>DEM</td>
<td>1/1/2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ted Lieu</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>DEM</td>
<td>1/1/2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas McClintock</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>REP</td>
<td>1/1/2009</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deborah Ross</td>
<td>NC</td>
<td>DEM</td>
<td>1/1/2021</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Why do people hug on to their positions in Congress?
• Members get annual allowances between $1M to $3M to staff and manage their offices and travel.
• The House and Senate average working 138-162 days per year.
• They receive a 72% subsidy for health insurance.
• Members can receive a lifelong pension of 80% of their salary.
• Free parking at airports.
• Being in the limelight.
Three options to get rid of career politicians:

1. Elect new people to Congress.
2. Have Congress pass a term limits amendment.
3. Use Article 5 of the Constitution, enabling states to propose Constitutional amendments like term limits.
Fool me once
Shame on you...

Fool me twice
Shame on me...

Fool me three times, we need term limits!

Proverbs for the 21st century

Proverbs for the 21st century Bill Schorr/Cagle Cartoons
Convention of States
Article V

1. Proposes Amendments to "this" U.S. Constitution

2. Limited to subject of state application

3. Authority-follows direction of Article V- apply to Congress, Congress calls- after application by 2/3 of the states

4. Scope- propose individual Amendments

5. Votes for passage at convention simple majority = 26 states

6. Individual Amendments singly ratified by 3/4 of states

7. Binds ALL states
“I will venture to add that, to me, the convention mode seems preferable, in that it allows amendments to originate with the people themselves, instead of only permitting them to take, or reject, propositions, originated by others, not especially chosen for that purpose, and which might not be precisely such, as they would wish to either accept or refuse.”

March 4, 1861, inaugural address
Support for a Convention of States By Party Affiliation

for amendments to impose fiscal restraints, limit federal power, and set term limits

REPUBLICANS
- Support: 81.3%
- Oppose: 6.7%
- Not Sure: 12.0%

DEMOCRATS
- Support: 50.2%
- Not Sure: 24.2%
- Oppose: 25.6%

INDEPENDENTS
- Support: 63.3%
- Oppose: 18.8%
- Not Sure: 17.9%
DEFEND OUR CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS.
REJECT & REVOKE CALLS FOR AN ARTICLE V CONVENTION.

Common Cause
ConventionofStates.com is taking the lead to encourage state legislators to call for a convention.
34 states must agree to a Convention of States
The threat of a Convention of States could be enough to cause Congress to pass a term limits bill.
Having term limits on members of the House and Senate won’t solve every problem in Washington.

Senator Roger Marshall, R-Kansas, has introduced a bill that would impose 12-year term limits on federal employees.
“If you keep doing what you’ve always done, you’ll keep getting what you’ve always got.”

Zig Zigler
Questions I have attempted to answer today:

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I recommend reading this book, written by Gerrick Wilkins, an Alabama Honda car dealer, that is running for Congress in 2024. If elected, he has promised to serve for no more than three 2-year terms.

The book covers the reasons for seeking Congressional term limits, the pros & cons, and why a Convention of States is needed to amend the Constitution.
If you support term limits for Congress, sign the petition at cosaction.com
If you support term limits for Congress, sign the petition at TermLimits.com.
If it is good enough for the White House

Then it is good enough for this house

TERM LIMITS FOR CONGRESS