

Common experience shows us that human nature is fraught with frailties. It is due to this observation that the Framers of the Constitution built checks and balances into our system of republican government. Knowing it was not in their power to change human nature, but possible to curb and redirect the waywardness of our inclinations, they set up our form of government such that natural rivalries for power would be checked to the benefit of the people.

One such check is the amendment provision of the Constitution. The Framers knew that over time, circumstances would change and new problems would become apparent, requiring at times a new amendment to the Constitution to address some glaring problem. They made sure the solutions to such problems would be serious ones agreed upon by a strong consensus of the public—and thus left us a very high bar—3/4ths of the state legislatures would be required to ratify.

Incumbency advantage is one of those problems, and term limits is the solution. That high bar of consensus is met among the public: 80% of voters support term limits for members of Congress. Republicans, Democrats, Independents—Americans of all stripes overwhelmingly agree that an era of professionalization in Congress has sent our nation into dysfunction, stalemate, and constant strife. Here in Ohio, both Democratic congressman Greg Landsman and Republican Senator Bernie Moreno support the reform. In fact, I've submitted to the committee letters from both of them in support of SJR6. While in Ohio and the other states we have true citizen legislatures, with representatives who live and work among those they represent—Washington is another planet, with entrenchment and lack of accountability. For this reason Ohio and Washington are like apples and oranges when it comes to incumbency advantage.

There are some who have concerns regarding a convention, and there are plenty of people in good faith on either side of that debate. I'm here to offer you a third view which allows us to lay all of that debate aside: there cannot ever be a term limits convention. SJR6 is single topic, and that topic pertains directly to the livelihoods of all members of Congress. Later when the states come close to the 34-state threshold of calling a term limits convention, Congress *must step in to act* to propose the term limits amendment themselves. And they will propose the amendment *then* for the very same reason that they won't *today*: self-interest. As the Framers knew, human nature could not be changed, but checks could be put in place to redirect the vulnerabilities of human nature. An Article V convention has never been called because in the vast majority of cases convention calls have been single topic, and the reforms with the most consensus around them had the rocket fuel required to pass enough states to provoke the Prodding Effect. Congress is prodded into preemptive action to stave off a movement by the states to impose an amendment on them. This Prodding Effect occurred with the 17th, 21st, and 22nd amendments among others. How much more will it be the case when term limits pertains directly to members' own livelihoods? Only a Congress with a professional death wish would let the states do it. Their hand will be forced to respond to the will of the people expressed through the states, while likely grandfathering themselves in and retaining credit for proposing this wildly popular reform. Your passage of SJR6 helps us help Congress reform itself by ending the age of endless incumbency and ushering in a new era of citizen legislators in Washington. Thank you.