

American public has said they want for a long time. It is not a new thing.

I just hope that when the sun sets on this vote tomorrow that we do get the 50 percent or so of the Democrats we need to have on that side of the aisle to vote with the, as the gentleman from Washington says, the better than 80 percent of the Republicans who are going to vote for this. We may get 85 or 90 percent before it is over with.

The point is, we need to have a bipartisan effort in order to pass term limits. Now I have my own personal views on why we need them, and I have my own convictions on which version is preferable. I happen to believe deeply that term limits are important to stop the career orientation of Congress that has developed over the past 50 or 60 years as we have gone to a full-time, year-round job that was never envisioned by the Founding Fathers who saw Members serving only a couple of months a year and going home to their businesses.

We do not do that anymore. We are not likely to. As we have developed this full-time Congress, Members have learned to give up jobs back home. Most Members do not have outside incomes. They are dependent upon this. This is their career today.

That has changed the attitude of Members in a way that is not necessarily desirable. While some Members can stand above that, many Members, I think, consciously or subconsciously try to please virtually every interest group that comes to Washington seeking assistance in their voting pattern in order to get reelected. The idea being, if you do not displease anybody, those who have the squeaky wheel are going to vote for you, you are going to get reelected, and you are going to be able to come back and continue your, quote, career.

I do not think that is healthy. That is not healthy in areas like balanced budgets where we do not get there because every interest that is in a budget is supported by some interest group. It is not the money that is involved. It is the votes and the concerns about reelection.

We need to mitigate that. Term limits would do that, plus it would place a permanent restraint on the opportunity for anybody in the future to ever become a committee chairman and serve 15 or 20 consecutive years as was the case until the Republicans took power this time and put it in the rule to say you can only serve 6 years as a committee chairman, and it would assure fresh blood out here every time when we have an election cycle and a regular turnover.

Now as far as the preference is concerned. I happen to prefer my version, which is 12 years in the House, 12 years in the Senate. I think shorter limits in the House than in the Senate would weaken the body vis-a-vis the Senate.

I also think you need to have about six years here before you have the ex-

perience that is needed to be a committee chairman or to be in leadership.

I also think it would be preferable to have uniformity throughout the Nation instead of, as one of my other brethren offering an amendment would have, an amendment that leaves it to the States. Once we put a 12-year cap, you would wind up then with a hodgepodge of some States 6 years, some states 8, some States 12 for on ad infinitum. I do not think that would be good public policy in the end.

But the Supreme Court under my proposal will ultimately make the decision as regards to the present Constitution and its interpretation when they decide the Arkansas case shortly.

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If they decide that the States have this power today, the amendment I am proposing would not disturb that. On the other hand, if they decide that it indeed is unconstitutional for the States to do what they have been doing, there would be established by my 12 and 12 amendment a uniform national standard which I think is preferable.

Then there are those who argue that well, retroactivity would be a good idea. I do not think it is a good idea. Twenty-two of the States that have adopted the term limits limitation around the country have said no to retroactivity, and the one State that had an opportunity to vote on it, Washington State, voted it down. It is like with tax laws or other kind of legislation out there, retroactivity is not a good idea.

There are Members of the other side of the aisle, some well intentioned on this issue, but some very much opposed to term limits, promoting this particular legislation just to create mischief, because they know it would cost votes on final passage.

We need to work very hard on whatever final version comes out here after we finish the amendment process tomorrow, and I am going to do this, to advocate my position ardently among the positions out there. But I am going to vote for whatever is left standing out here, and I urge any Member to do that. If you do not do it, I think the voters back home ought to hold you accountable on the vote you have on final passage of whatever is here tomorrow. It is our chance to get term limits that better than 80 percent of the American public strongly want. So I urge a favorable vote tomorrow on final passage, and, of course, I would prefer it if you vote for my 12-year version.

CONGRESSIONAL TERM LIMITS NEEDED

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from South Carolina [Mr. INGLIS] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. INGLIS of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, tonight I rise on the eve of a very historic day in this Chamber. To-

morrow, for the first time in the history of this country, we are going to vote on term limits. This is a very exciting moment as we prepare to undertake what I believe to be the most significant reform that this body has ever made for itself. This is an exciting day.

First of all, I want to indicate to all watching here tonight and all of my colleagues here in the House that this rule that makes in order tomorrow these four options is a tremendous opportunity for us to get real accountability on the issue of term limits. Tomorrow there isn't going to be any place for Members of Congress to hide. They are either voting for my 6-year bill, they are voting for a 12-year bill that Mr. McCOLLUM just spoke of, they are voting for a 12-year bill that Mr. HILLEARY spoke of earlier, or they are voting for a fraud that is masquerading as term limits that is really not term limits, it is designed as a poison pill to kill term limits by retroactivity provisions. Those are the options. Tomorrow Members in this Chamber will have to vote yes or no on term limits.

Tonight what I would like to do is begin laying the case that we will make after many hours of debate tomorrow on the need for term limits. I have a couple of charts that I think will demonstrate fairly well why we need term limits.

The first one I have here shows the average tenure of a Member of Congress and members of the general public in their jobs. As you can see here, the average American keeps his or her job 6 years. The average Member of Congress keeps his or her job 8 years. The average member, and this is a critical number, the average member of the leadership of this institution has kept his or her job for 22 years. That is ranking members and committee chairmen, add them all up, take the average, they have been here an average of 22 years.

I think this tells the story of what is wrong with this Congress. This is what the American people seek to change. They want a more fluid body. They do not want a leadership that has been here 22 years on average. They want it more in line with what the average American experiences, a job change on average every 6 years.

Of course, in the 1994 election we had a great deal of talk about change, and there was a tremendous change, because we got a change in the management team here in Congress. I should point out right here what a difference an election can make. The last Congress, the 103d Congress, we were fighting against a Speaker of the House of Representatives who sued the people of his State, arguing that what they had done in a State initiative was unconstitutional. Now we have a Speaker of the House who is helping us to get a good vote on this floor and is pushing Members of this Congress to vote for what the American people want, which is term limits. By 80 percent the American people want term limits. So when

you look at this election, it made a tremendous difference.

The 1994 elections brought people like Mr. FOX, my colleague here, who arranged this series of special orders here tonight, and I very much appreciate all of his work on terms limits. It has brought wonderful people like Mr. FOX here. It has brought people like Mr. HILLEARY, who has an amendment on the floor tomorrow. It has brought people like my two colleagues from South Carolina, Mr. SANFORD and Mr. GRAHAM, that are strong supporters of term limits.

But that election, for all that change and particularly that management change, really reflected a great deal of continuity in this body. Here is again why we need term limits. The 1994 election, of those who wanted to come back, 90 percent were reelected. In 1992, of those who wanted to come back, 88 percent were reelected. In 1990, of those who wanted to come back, 96 percent were reelected.

It is very important to look at those who wanted to come back, because the change we have gotten, particularly if you look at 1992 and 1994, has been as a result of open seat elections. In other words, people deciding to retire or leave for whatever reason, they left, they left an open seat. As a result, we had an open seat election.

The gentleman from Michigan [Mr. HOEKSTRA] is here with me tonight. When we were elected, both of us came in 1992, we both, maybe one of the best arguments against term limits, because both of us happened to defeat incumbents. That was very rare in 1992, 88 percent of those who wanted to come back, and again, 1994, 90 percent of those who wanted to come back came back.

This indicates we have got a permanent Congress. That permanent Congress needs to be changed by term limits. If we enact term limits, we will have a different kind of Congress, we will have a Congress that is more accountable to the American people, and a Congress that would not take much time to pass a constitutional amendment on term limits when they realize that 80 percent of the American people want it. The percentages are maybe reversed in here. It is hard to get people to vote for term limits inside here. But tomorrow I think we will do just that.

SUPPORT TERM LIMITS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. HOEKSTRA] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow we will have an historic debate on the floor of the House. We are going to take another step in reforming the place where we do the people's business.

Mr. Speaker, if we reflect back on what we have accomplished so far during this year, on opening day we made the agreements, and we have now im-

plemented cuts of committee staff. We have reduced the number of committees. We have cut committee budgets. We passed a bill which would apply the laws that apply to the private sector now also make those apply to Congress. That bill has now gone through the Senate and has been signed by the President.

We went on to reform the House. Republicans decided as we took control that we would limit terms of committee chairmen and chairwomen. We also decided that any individual Member could only chair one committee or one subcommittee. What we have been able to do is disperse power so that people like my colleague, the gentleman from South Carolina, Mr. INGLIS, and myself, who have only been here two terms, that within the second term that we are here, would have the opportunity to chair subcommittees. So we are creating more opportunities for more influence among more Members of Congress.

We went on to reform our process, additional reform for the House. This House of Representatives can be proud that we passed the balanced budget amendment. We can also express our disappointment that the other body failed to pass the balanced budget amendment. We have passed the line-item veto, and it looks like we are going to make progress in being able to take that through a conference committee and a Republican Congress providing a Democratic President with a line-item veto.

Tomorrow we will have an historic debate. We will do something that many States have not had the opportunity to do, or that they have not had the courage to do, is we will have a debate, and we will have a vote on term limits.

To date, what has happened with term limits around the country is that 22 States have considered state-imposed term limits, and in all of those States, they considered it through a process which I believe soon we are going to have to consider here on the floor of the House, is that they have returned power back to the people through an initiative and referendum process. They have not turned power back. What they have actually done is they have invited the people to participate with them in the process. It is interesting to note that the only place where this kind of activity on term limits has taken place is where States have invited the people to participate with them in the legislative and law-making process of that State. No State legislature has passed term limits.

Where we now go is tomorrow we are going to have the discussion on this floor of the House. I hope at the end of the day tomorrow that we will be able to say that we have taken another step in the reform process and that we will have had 290 Members of this House who have been willing to step up and say that we endorse and recognize the importance of term limits. We recognize the input and the value and the di-

rection that the American people have provided to us that says we believe that we need a flow in and a flow out of Members of the House of Representatives.

Remember, only 18 percent of the American people believe that we are doing a good job. I think maybe the recent polls show we may be all the way up to 32 percent. One of the primary reasons for that is they believe and they recognize that the policies and the directions and the laws that come out of this House bear only slight resemblance to the problems that they see in their local communities. They believe that by having Members coming in and flowing out, we will have better laws and better process; we will have Members coming in, moving out of real jobs, coming to Congress, and then moving back after they recognize that they have served here for a period of time. I do not think it is really all that important whether it is 6 or 12 years. I personally prefer 12. I will also vote for the 6-year-term proposal because the voters in my State have instructed me to support and to work for the passage of 6 years, but most importantly, to work for and push the concept of term limits for the House of Representatives. Mr. Speaker, it will be an historic debate. I am looking forward to the debate, and I am looking forward to Wednesday night when we can celebrate the passage of term limits.

PROPER ALLOCATION OF TAX DOLLARS REQUIRES EXPERIENCED LEGISLATORS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 1995, the gentleman from New York [Mr. OWENS] is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, a large part of what we do here in the House of Representatives relates to budgets and appropriations. I would say 75 percent at least of what we do is related to the budget and appropriations process. It is the most important thing we do, and I think that there needs to be far more discussion of the budget and appropriations process. It is a highly complex process, it is a very important process and the details are very important also.

Mr. Speaker, one of the problems with term limits is that it trivializes the functions of the Congress. It makes it appear that this is an easy job and it is easy to understand what goes on here. The budget and appropriations process alone is a tremendously difficult job, and no one would recommend for a difficult job related to their health care that they go and seek the surgeon who has the least number of years, that nobody wants to have open heart surgery done by a surgeon with 15 or 12 years experience. On the contrary, most people seek the most-