

confront representatives such as myself with a very difficult dilemma where we are being asked to support a concept that we believe in very deeply but, yet, which we find at odds with the laws of our own State.

Madam Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to serve in this body.

ANOTHER VIEW ON TERM LIMITS

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

Mr. WISE. Madam Speaker, I rise as one who voted against the term-limit limitations, because as I have heard the arguments tonight, it is not how many terms you have, it is what you do with the term, the term, the one term at a time. It is what you do with that term and then it is what the voters think that you have done with that term and how they feel about that term that determines or should determine whether or not you return.

In the case of my State, West Virginia, we are a small state. We have three House Members. Other States have far bigger delegations. I think that my State would be, the majority of my State would say, why is it that we should be limited as to whether or not we can vote for ROBERT C. BYRD, for instance, and the distinguished service that he has had? Why is it that we should be limited in whether or not we can vote for other leaders who may rise and show themselves to be able?

In the case of a small State like West Virginia, with three House Members, please remember that when you have term limits what you are going to do is to turn this place over to the large States. And so the Californias, the Floridas, the Texasas will dominate every 2 years who it is that becomes chairs and subcommittee chairs and ranking Members.

So small States have a vested interest in making sure that there is some kind of equality here so that we have an equal say as well. There are many here who say, term limits, we will really rein in the Members on this thing. Nobody ever talks about the staff. Nobody limited the staff. Nobody limited the lobbyists. Nobody limited the others that all are part of this mix called democracy and called a legislative body.

So what happens is then the institutional memory now resides entirely with those who are truly the paid professionals here. I do not say that disparagingly of them, except just to make that observation that those people who become the ranking members and subcommittee chairs and the chairs will have less and less to say about what actually happens in their committees.

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I would also like for people to think for a second, what is it that everyone is to be ashamed about for having some

kind of experience, particularly if that experience has been reinforced every 2 years in something wonderful called an election? I refuse to be ashamed for the fact that I have developed more experience, and feel that I am a more able representative of my constituency, but knowing all the time that my constituency decides every 2 years whether or not that is the kind of experience they want, or whether I am exercising that properly, or in what they think is a proper format.

Does anyone around here ever walk into a law office, a physician's office, or any there office, into a store, and say "Hey, could I have the most junior person around here? I want the one who just got here, the one who just got out of medical school, the one who just got their certification. Please, I want to skip over the most senior person. I don't want to get to somebody who has had even maybe 13 years, of course not."

What is it that is supposedly bad about experience if the voters are truly exercising their control? That gets to a very important point, Madam Speaker, that what we are talking about here is the frustration that is very real in our country about whether or not Congress is responding. That frustration needs to be dealt with in campaign finance reform.

It would be my hope that H.R. 1 would not be a term-limit bill. Actually, let us hope there does not need to be a campaign finance reform bill in 1997, because I would like to see it out on the floor in 1995. That, I think, limiting the amounts of money, curbing the money chase, making it easier for challengers to take on incumbents, that is real term limitation.

Somebody pointed out that 90 percent of incumbents, 91 percent, were re-elected last time, but what they did not point out was that so many chose not to run because they saw the odds, they read the polls, they talked to their constituents. The fact of the matter is that over half this Congress, 219 Members, have been here 5 years or less. Almost one-half has been renewed in just the last two elections, the last 4 years.

Madam Speaker, I think those are important statistics. The average lifespan, political lifespan of a Member of Congress in the House is less than 12 years, that very term, that very limitation which many would seek to impose.

Madam Speaker, for all those reasons I happen to think that term limits is one of those bumper sticker phrases which sounds good, but which in reality does not further our democracy.

I think our voters, in West Virginia our voters do not need term limits. I would point out that in our State, for instance, over half of the House of Delegates, on any given election 40 to 50 percent of our House of Delegates is changed. Indeed, many members of our State Senate this year were changed. Our voters know how to judge people

and how to limit terms on their own, and that is through a process, a wonderful process called an election.

A HISTORIC NIGHT WITH VOTES ON TERM LIMITS

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

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. Speaker, rather than to try to make a speech, I just have a few minutes of reflection on what I think happened tonight and what is going to happen in the future.

It is a historic night. The Contract With America said we would allow votes on term limits, and we did. Now it is up to the public to see who voted and how they voted on all the votes. If you really want term limits, you are going to have to act on what the body did tonight. If you think there is some correcting that needs to be done, it is up to you to do it.

I can assure you this, after having been here almost 100 days, that this body is not going to give in to the will of the people easily. There is plenty of blame to go around, and the numbers speak for themselves. Eighty percent of the Democratic Party voted against final passage on this bill. Eighty percent of the Republican Party voted for final passage. Those are pretty compelling numbers. However, to be honest, Mr. Speaker, there is shared blame here. The Republican Party needs to push term limits harder, from the bottom and the top. My class, 73 Republican freshmen, about 90, 95 percent of us believe in term limits and believe in it deeply. I admire people who disagree with me who have equally strong beliefs, and they do exist, but what we have to do as a party is to get more focused and make sure the bill does not get messed up in committee and have to explain our positions here and get off track.

I think we will learn something from tonight, that we will be more focused next year, and when the vote comes in the first part of the 105th Congress, that we will be more focused as a party and we will really, really push for term limits.

The good news is that people have voted, they are sort of out in the public's eye now, and you can determine who is with you and who is against you. The bad news is that the people who are not members of a term limits organization, and I do feel sorry for those people who are Members of term limits organizations that have worked so hard to get their message across, that it fell short, but the average, everyday citizen who is not a member of anything, other than maybe their church, who is trying to raise their kids, trying to make it through life, we let them down. That is what really bothers me the most.

The only hope that we have in changing this country, in my humble opinion, is to pass some form of term limits. I ran on four issues. I am the first Republican to be elected in 120 years in my district. I ran not so much on Republican-Democrat differences, and they are great, and I am very proud to be a Republican, but I ran on the idea of let us change Congress for the good of our country.

Let us have a balanced budget amendment and make sure both parties, regardless of who is in control, spend within their limits. Let us give the President of the United States, regardless of party, the line-item veto so he or she can strike from our budget pork barrel projects to get us reelected, which both parties can succumb to.

Let us make every law in the land apply to every Member of Congress, so we will understand what it is like to live in America, not just in Washington, DC, in a protected class.

The fourth institutional reform I ran on was term limits. After being up here 100 days, that is the cornerstone of reform. We need to have people come to this body with a different motivation, with a different mind-set. People should come here wanting to make the world where they came from better, not the world in Washington better for themselves. The game should not be "How can I become a committee chairman or subcommittee chairman?" The game should be "How can I make my community better, how can I make my Nation better, and go home?"

There are so many people in America who have been denied the opportunity to serve in this body because when you are an incumbent, the money is great. I agree with the gentleman about lobbying reform and finance reform. I came from a State, South Carolina, where 18 people went to jail, who served in the General Assembly, for taking bribes. We have the strongest ethics law in the country. You can operate government and have reform, lobbying reform, campaign finance reform. I am for that.

However, the gentleman who just spoke misses the point for the needs of term limits. It works hand-in-hand. Money is a problem, but motivation is the real problem. People come up here and get trapped in the world which they become a part of, Washington, DC. It is unlike any world I have ever been in in my life. People spend money up here like you are not going to make it anymore. It is the most detached place I have ever been. It is so different from the world that I know.

The only way you are going to change our country, in my opinion, is to make sure that people come up here for a limited period of time and that they are working on improving the world from which they came.

Term limits, unfortunately, in many ways, is the only vehicle I know to bring that about. I am optimistic in 1996 that the votes of the American public will reflect the votes tonight, and that there will be a correlation be-

tween the people who defied the will of the American people in this body and those who get reelected on both sides of the aisle.

THE VOTE ON TERM LIMITS

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

Mr. FOX of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I want to also join with my colleague, the gentleman from South Carolina, LINDSEY GRAHAM, who I think spoke eloquently about the fact that the fight is not over. We may have fallen short tonight by not having 290 votes, but we had 208 votes, which as compared to years ago when they had 107 votes, we are much closer to our goal.

The Contract With America pledged to the American people that the House Republicans would bring this to a floor vote, and we are pledged to getting a successful 290 votes. This is going to happen one day.

Remember what brought us to this point. Forty years of Democratic rule in the House has created an institution less accountable by the American people. The longer Members have served in Congress, the more removed they become to the people who elected them. That lack of accountability in prior Congresses forced an environment that resulted in corruption of the House bank and the House post office.

Those scandals, along with Congress' inability to balance the budget and control runaway deficit spending, have rallied a significant majority of the American people in support of term limits. Term limits will end careerism in Congress. The Founding Fathers never envisioned the House as a House of Lords, but rather as a citizen legislature.

Term limits provide real choices for voters. Term limits do not restrict voter choices. On the contrary, they create more choices. After California, for instance, passed its term limits in 1990 for State legislators, the number of candidates running for office increased by 40 percent.

The American people also overwhelmingly support term limits. That is why tonight we should have passed it. There should have been more Democratic support for this legislation. Eighty-three percent of the Republicans supported it and only 18 percent of the Democrats. Yet poll after poll shows overwhelming support for term limits, in some polls as high as 85 percent of the public. There are already 22 States that have adopted term limit laws.

Finally, I would say this, Madam Speaker. The term limit laws are already imposed on other political offices. There is legal precedent for this. The President is limited to two terms of offices. Thirty-five States impose term limits on their Governors, as they do in our State of Pennsylvania.

I would ask those listening tonight and those in the gallery and my colleagues who are still here in the Chamber and those in their offices, consider when this legislation is brought back up, if you were not part of the movement to make the change, please talk to your constituents, talk to your friends and neighbors, and realize that along with the kinds of reforms we are going to have with franking and the gift ban and with campaign reform, this is just one more reform that the American people want us to do, because they realize that Congress can be accountable and can be accessible, and with their help and God's, we will make the final reform of term limits.

AN IMPORTANT FACTOR IN TERM LIMITS: CHANGING PEOPLE'S ATTITUDES

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

Mr. GUTKNECHT. Madam Speaker, this has been a very historic day. For many years the Congress has wrestled with whether or not they would have an open vote under rules in which amendments could be offered to the whole issue of term limits.

I come to the Congress from the State of Minnesota, and having served 12 years in the Minnesota legislature, I became a late adapter to the whole notion of term limits. On the front of the House Chamber in the Minnesota House of Representatives, there is a sign in gold leaf. It says "Vox Populorum est vox Dei." In Latin I guess that translates to the voice of the people is the voice of God.

Before I was in the legislature, I was in sales, and went to a number of sales training programs. One of the most important words in terms of changing human behavior is the word "attitude." Before you can change people's behavior, you have to change their attitude. I think one of the most important arguments in favor of term limits is changing the word attitude or changing people's attitudes.

I think if people go to the Congress or if they go to the State legislature, if they go to the presidency, whatever the public office may be, if they know they are only going to serve for a limited amount of time, I think they go into that office with a much different attitude than if they see that as a life-long career.

I think the American people are way out in front of us on this. I think in the final analysis they will prevail. In fact, the late Senator Everett Dirksen perhaps said it best when he said "The more I feel the heat, the more I see the light." I think more and more Members of Congress now are beginning to feel the heat from the American people, and they are beginning to see the light.