

No Uncertain

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE TERM LIMITS MOVEMENT

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Terms

Self-Limiter Victory

Self-Limiter Tim Johnson Wins Hotly-Contested Illinois Primary

On March 21, self-limiter Tim Johnson won the Republican nomination for the Illinois Congressional seat currently held by retiring Rep. Tom Ewing. This win marks a victory for term limits advocates over the political establishment, as one of his opponents in the primary, Sam Ewing, was Rep. Ewing's son, and the other, Bill Brady, was endorsed by Speaker of the House Dennis Hastert.

While both of the other candidates opposed all forms of term limits, Johnson ran for office on a pledge to serve as a citizen legislator and won with

44 percent of the vote.

"The seniority system in Congress hurts all of us because it rewards those who put their own reelection concerns above all else," Johnson said. "I will enter Congress knowing full well the date upon which I will leave. I will focus entirely on the good of my district and my country."

Americans for Limited Terms began airing TV ads in Johnson's district on February 25, highlighting Johnson's three-term self-limiting pledge. The ads also make use of a compre-



Tim Johnson

continued on page 2

**I
N
S
I
D
E**

**Message from
Paul Jacob – page 2**

**Turning the Tables
on Incumbents
– page 3**

**They Said It
– page 6**

**Candidate Spotlight
– page 7**

**The Last Word
– page 8**

Electoral Competition

Term Limits Helps Open 16 Seats Thanks to Retiring Legislators

If anyone has a doubt as to whether career politicians remain in office because they love power and influence, consider Rep. Tom Bliley (R-VA). He was first elected to Congress 20 years ago, but announced his retirement in early March because of the

three-term limit on House Committee Chairs. Rather than share some of the power he's wielded for so long, he prefers to leave Congress entirely.

He joins Reps. Bill Archer, Bill Goodling, John Kasich, and John

continued on page 4

Message from the National Director

“California Miracle”

It happened. It's hard to believe, but it actually happened. An incumbent was defeated in his party's primary by a challenger. The last time it happened the incumbent was wearing a monitoring bracelet on his ankle so the feds could keep tabs on him. Yes, it is a bit tough to hit the campaign trail when you're a convicted felon.

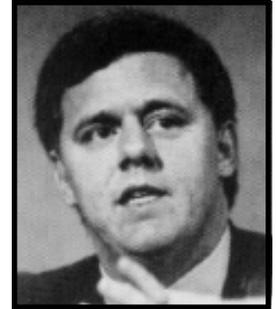
This time, the defeated incumbent was 10-term Rep. Matthew Martinez of California. A local columnist says Martinez was a “dull, plodding back-bencher . . . the kind of politician who makes me wonder if term limits aren't such a bad idea.”

Now voters have sent him packing. Some may say that an incumbent losing at the polls shows we don't need term limits. Well, if an incumbent being defeated every time Halley's comet meanders by the earth is your idea of a vibrant democracy, maybe so.

Turns out Martinez lost his seat precisely because of term limits — term limits on the state level. This

incumbent congressman was defeated by state Assembly-woman Hilda Solis — herself an incumbent. But unlike so many incumbents, Solis didn't enjoy a lock on her seat. In term-limited California, no one can stay in the Assembly for more than 6 years or in the Senate for more than eight.

Thanks to term limits, more challenges are being made to incumbents. Term limits is livening up campaigns — not only state and local races where limits are the law — but also for those pampered professional politicians in Congress. ■



Paul F.

Self-Limiter Victory in GOP Primary

continued from page 1

hensive study recently conducted by the National Taxpayers Union (NTU), in which the records of all Members of Congress were compared on spending and size of government issues. Not surprisingly for term limits activists, the NTU study found that Members of Congress who make and keep term limits pledges are much more likely to favor lower

spending and less government than are their colleagues who seek careers in Congress.

The ads show a farmer explaining that Johnson's term limits pledge means we can trust him to fight for smaller government and lower taxes, and contrast Johnson's citizen legislator approach to governing with that of his opponents who want careers in Washington, who will “throw mud to get there,” and “waste our tax dollars trying to stay there



forever.”

With such a strong commitment to serve his district in Congress, Johnson is sure to make a difference as a citizen legislator. ■

No Uncertain Terms

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10 G St., NE, SUITE 410
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20002

1-800-733-6440

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Term Limits Lead States' Big Fish To Try for the Big Pond, Congress

by David E. Rosenbaum, *The New York Times*

For nearly two decades, Elaine Bloom has been a fixture in the Florida House of Representatives, an outspoken Democrat who has served at various times as a deputy majority leader, speaker pro tem and chairwoman of the health and tourism committees.

Now, at 62, she is running an uphill campaign for Congress against a popular 10-term Republican incumbent, E. Clay Shaw Jr., in what promises to be one of the most expensive House races in the country this year. Why would she relinquish a position of stature she loves in Tallahassee for a long shot at a seat on a back bench in Washington, a thousand miles from her home and family?

Two words: term limits.

Like 17 other states, Florida placed a limit in the early 1990's on the number of years that legislators and many other state officials could serve.

This year, in dozens of places from coast to coast, politicians like Ms. Bloom who are prohibited from running for re-election are campaigning instead for higher office against prominent incumbents. It is a consequence that few of the advocates foresaw when the term-limit measures were enacted. And it has created many compelling races for Congress.

In California, for instance, a state senator knocked off an incumbent congressman in the Democratic primary last month, and several other state legislators are competing in Congressional races. In Ohio, two of the leading members of the Legislature competed against each other in the Republican primary for a Congressional seat in Columbus.

Ms. Bloom typifies the situation. "I have been an insider," she said as she drove from a lunch at a synagogue in North Miami Beach to the police station here in Hollywood, just north of Fort Lauderdale,

where she spoke to the officers. "I love the Legislature. If it were not for term limits, I probably would continue where I am. It would be the easiest thing to do. But that's now possible now."

In some states, like California and Colorado, the first impact of term-limit laws was felt in 1998. In others, like Florida and Ohio, eight-year limits were enacted in 1992, and the first effect is being felt this year.

In California this month, State Senator Hilda L. Solis soundly defeated Representative Matthew G. Martinez, who was running for his 10th term, in the Democratic primary for a seat in a suburb of Los Angeles that is safe for the Democrats.

"There is no doubt that what motivated her was term limits," said Allan E. Hoffenblum, publisher of the nonpartisan California Target Book, which handicaps political races in the state. "She was looking for a long-term career."

In California, there are only 40 state senators and 80 seats in the Assembly, compared with 52 Congressional seats from California out of a total of 435 in the House of

Representatives. That means state senators represent more people and generally have considerably more influence than all but the most senior members of Congress. And in the Assembly, positions of authority are reached much more quickly than they are in Congress.

"Nobody in his right gourd would leave Sacramento and run for Congress if not for term limits," Mr. Hoffenblum said. "It's 3,000 miles away, and it's awfully hard for a member of Congress to have any visibility in California."

But with term limits in place, another Democratic

This year, in dozens of places from coast to coast, politicians who are prohibited from running for re-election are campaigning instead for higher office against prominent incumbents.

continued on page 4

continued from page 3

state senator, Adam Schiff, is challenging Representative James E. Rogan, a Republican, in the district that includes Pasadena.

In San Diego, a term-limited Democratic assemblywoman, Susan Davis, is running against Representative Brian P. Bilbray, and in a district west of San Jose, a term-limited Republican assemblyman, Jim Cunneen is running for an open seat in the House.

In New York, there are no state-level term limits, but New York City officials can serve no more than eight years. Mayor Rudolph Giuliani, who cannot run for a third term, is running for the United States Senate. Also, several City Council members are running for higher office.

In Ohio, two legislators about to lose their seats to the eight-year limit — Pat Tiberi, majority leader of the Ohio House, and State Senator Eugene Watts — competed this month in a rousing Republican primary to replace Representative John R. Kasich, who is retiring from Congress. Mr. Tiberi (pronounced TEE-berry) won.

Mr. Kasich himself is something of a victim of term limits. The Supreme Court ruled in 1995 that states could not apply limits to the terms of members of Congress. But the Republican

Party in the House decreed that its members could sit no more than six years as committee chairmen. Mr. Kasich's term as chairman of the Budget Committee is up after this year, and the resulting loss of power and status is the main reason he is retiring.

In Montana, another state where term limits are having an

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effect for the first time, three friends and colleagues who are unable to run for re-election — Attorney General Joseph R. Mazurek, Auditor Mark O’Keefe and Secretary of State Mike Cooney — are campaigning against one another for the Democratic nomination for governor.

Two Democratic governors

who cannot run for re-election are challenging Republican senators, setting up a couple of the tightest Senate races of the year. In Delaware, Gov. Thomas R. Carper is running against Senator William V. Roth Jr., and in Missouri, Gov. Mel Carnahan is challenging Senator John Ashcroft.

There may be as many competitive races for Congress here in Florida as a result of term limits as any other state.

In addition to Ms. Bloom, State Senator Patsy Kurth, a Democrat, is running against a three-term Republican representative, Dave Weldon, in a district that includes Melbourne and Vero Beach. In Orlando, Linda Chapin, a Democrat who has completed the eight years she is allowed to serve as chairwoman of the Orange County Commission, a powerful position equivalent to mayor of a large city, is running for the seat now held by Representative Bill McCollum, a Republican who is running for the Senate.

Republicans are favored to hold all three of these seats. But politicians in both parties give each of the Democratic women a strong chance to pull an upset. ■

Excerpted from *The New York Times*

Retiring Legislators Increase Competition

continued from page 1

Porter, who are also retiring from the House because of the three-term rule.

In addition, Reps. Charles Canady, Helen Chenoweth-Hage, Tom Coburn, Tillie Fowler, Jack

Metcalf, Matt Salmon, and Mark Sanford are all keeping their word and retiring at the end of their term limits pledges this year.

All told, an incredible 16 of the 30 open House seats this year are directly or indirectly attributable to term limits. No other source of Congressional electoral competition comes close to term

limits.

“Term limits is quietly accomplishing its goal of increasing representative government through electoral competition,” said U.S. Term Limits National Director Paul Jacob. “These term limits-induced retirements will give hundreds of thousands of Americans real choices at the polls this year.” ■



**COMMON
SENSE**
by Paul Jacob

**The Weekly Radio Commentary of
the U.S. Term Limits Foundation**

“Tip of the Iceberg”

My favorite restaurants are those greasy-spoon diners — the kind that U.S. Senate candidate Hillary Clinton recently visited. But she forgot to leave a tip for the waitress, a single mom. Now, there’s no need to make a federal case over someone innocently forgetting to leave a tip. At any rate, it’s only the tip of the iceberg.

Hillary seems to live in a whole ‘nother world. For instance, she was shocked by the high property taxes in New York after she bought a home. For the last 18 years she hasn’t had to pay property taxes or rent or a mortgage or even an electric bill, because the taxpayers picked up those costs.

Consider two other issues: education and Social Security.

Mr. and Mrs. Clinton and many members of

Congress claim to be advocates of public schools. They argue against providing any funds for poor students to go to private schools. But they send their own kids to private schools, not public schools.

Take Social Security. Can career politicians really represent the millions of Americans who pay the high payroll taxes and depend on Social Security in their old age? Remember: congressmen don’t need Social Security for a second; they have a lavish pension that makes them millionaires when they retire.

Can career politicians “feel our pain” if they don’t have to foot the bill? Government of the people, by the people, and for the people means they should spend a little time in the real world. It’s just a tip. ■

Does your local radio station carry **COMMON SENSE**?
If not, ask them to call 1-800-733-6440 for a **FREE** subscription.
Provided to radio stations three times a week.

They Said It

What a Mush-Head

“George Nethercutt, R-Wash., . . . took House Speaker Thomas Foley’s seat away largely on a pledge to serve no more than three terms to avoid the ossification of long service. Nethercutt says he made a mistake and has discovered that seniority can be useful after all. What a mush-head.”

—*Omaha World-Herald*
March 25, 2000

The Fruits of Term Limits

“This is the first year that term limits have prevented many senators from seeking re-election. House members were first affected by term limits in the 1998 elections.

“Of the 17 senators whose terms expire this year, 13 cannot seek re-election because of term limits. Twenty-four of the 100 House members cannot seek re-election for the same reason.”

—*Southwest Times-Record* (Fort Smith, Arkansas)
March 22, 2000

“Politicians immediately cry that term limits would be unconstitutional, which as usual, much of the public buys. Little do the politicians understand that it is we who the constitution was written for, not they. If term limits are seen by judges as unconstitutional, perhaps it is time we made a change in the constitution.”

**—*Galesburg Zephyr* (Galesburg, IL)
March 14, 2000**

Term limits help stir competition

“When filing closed at 5 p.m. Tuesday, 608 candidates had jumped into the Aug. 8 primaries. Seven have already withdrawn, but the remaining 601 candidates still set a record, said Secretary of State Bekki Cook. . . .

“Cook said the high interest — the previous record for filers was 597 candidates in 1982 — was because of legislative term limits; a larger crop of judicial elections; and because Missouri has five parties appearing on the ballot.”

—*Blue Springs Examiner* (Blue Springs, Missouri)
March 29, 2000

Progress, One County at a Time

“A 1998 initiative that established term limits for Madison County officials was found to be constitutional Thursday by Circuit Judge John G. Holland. . . .

“With the voters’ approval of the term-limit petition in 1998, all incumbents who exceeded the five-term limit were ineligible to file for office in the upcoming 2000 general election.”

—*The Morning News of Northwest Arkansas*
March 25, 2000

Candidate Spotlight:

Jeff Flake – Arizona Congressional District I

Doing Something

Jeff Flake is determined to be a citizen legislator. And as a candidate for Arizona's 1st congressional district, he's already received the endorsement of Rep. Matt Salmon (R-AZ), a current citizen legislator who's honoring his commitment to limit his own terms in office by stepping down after his current term expires.

"I can think of no one who is better prepared to make a real difference in Washington than Jeff Flake," Salmon said. "I not only plan to vote for Jeff, I plan to campaign with him and do what it takes to see that he represents Arizona's first congressional district."

Flake understands that a commitment to serve the people in his district entails leaving office before the special interests and pork-barrel politics of Washington, DC, have a chance to turn public service into a self-serving career. By

signing the U.S. Term Limits Declaration to limit his own terms, he signals the people of his district that he's a part of their community — and intends to stay that way.

"The first order of business for any prospective candidate for public office is to explain why he or she is running for office," Flake said in a speech last fall. "For me that task is easy — the federal government is far too big, it taxes and regulates far too much, and it is time that we do something about it."



Jeff Flake

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**– Jeff Flake,
candidate for Arizona's
1st Congressional District**

Flake brings a wide variety of real-world experience to his candidacy. In addition to his work in public affairs and his seven years as the executive director of the Goldwater Institute in his home state, he spent time in Namibia, Africa, as the executive director of the Foundation for Democracy, an organization that monitored the nation's independence process. He currently lives in Mesa, Ariz., with his wife and five children.

Flake's congressional priorities include providing tax relief, cutting corporate welfare, and reforming entitlements programs. And without the pressures of political careerism holding him back, he's bound to make a difference. ■

In Our View

Washington Congressman George Nethercutt has become a poster boy for broken term-limit promises. Nethercutt, a Republican, had pledged to restrict himself to three terms in the U.S. House, if elected. But after six years, he changed his mind, apparently deciding there was no political life after Capitol Hill. Nethercutt is taking heavy bashing from U.S. Term Limits, an organization devoted not only to promoting the idea of term limits but keeping those who make “I’ll-step-aside” promises before the public for accountability.

Meanwhile, a group of self-limiters on the Hill, including Oklahoma Republican Tom Coburn, have been taking a long, hard look at federal spending and discovered a spectacular failure of congressional oversight. According to the Citizen Legislators Caucus, Congress approved nearly \$101 billion in 1999 for government programs that have never been authorized or that are no longer authorized and has given the go-ahead for \$120 billion this fiscal year.

The 14 or so members of

Congress in the term-limit camp are determined to serve as watchdogs over the public’s purse.

Rep. Tom Tancredo, R-Colo., Coburn and other members of the Citizen Legislators Caucus have sent letters to their colleagues,

Citizen legislators, unlike professional politicians, are willing to tackle the tough problems without fear of offending special interests or political power brokers.

made speeches on the floor of House and talked directly with other lawmakers on the Hill about the unauthorized programs and accompanying spending.

The next step, according to the term-limits newsletter, *No Uncertain Terms*, is for the members to oppose rules that suspend points of order against such spending and to

propose amendments to cut out the funding. Good luck.

This is a small example of the promise of term limits to improve government. Citizen legislators, unlike professional politicians, are willing to tackle the tough problems without fear of offending special interests or political power brokers. They are beholden to the folks back home, not to those in back rooms, and less worried about losing an election.

More likely to be independent from such outside influences suggests that they are also more likely to find realistic, workable solutions for the prickly issues of funding Social Security and Medicare, for curbing intrusive government, for reducing regulation, for trimming taxes and for reforming programs sorely in need of reform.

Tom Coburn, by the way, is keeping his promise to serve no more than three terms in Congress. He will be missed. ■

Reprinted from the *Joplin Globe* (Joplin, MO)