

STATE NEWS

Term Limits Safe in Arizona and Utah; Legislators Fail to Act on Repeal Measures

As their time in office draws near, self-serving Arizona legislators have anxiously tried to extend their own time in office. Recently, both a House committee and the House Committee of the Whole passed a bill that would have repealed term limits.

Standing up for principle, Rep. Linda Lopez (D-Tucson) said that the only complaints she's heard about term limits have come from legislators themselves, rather than

voters.

When the bill came to a final floor vote, it failed 37-22. Because the bill died in the House, the Senate will not move forward on the issue.

Eight-year term limits were overwhelmingly passed in 1992, with 74 percent of the voters approving these limits for legislators in both the Arizona House and Senate.

Paul Jacob, National Director
continued on page 2



Arizona Capitol Building

INSIDE

The Privilege of Serving
— page 3

New Boss, Old Boss
— page 5

They Said It
— page 6

The 22nd Amendment
— page 7

The Last Word
— page 8

PUBLIC OPINION

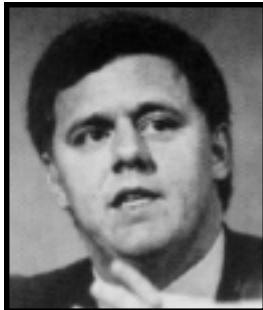
Support for Term Limits Remains Strong in Montana

Having seen firsthand the benefits of term limits in the 2000 election cycle, voters continue to support limits for their elected officials. According to a December *Billings Gazette* statewide survey, 61 percent of voters would vote for term limits again.

In November 2000, Montanans experienced for the first time the effects of the eight-year term limits imposed on state office-

holders by voters in 1992. That year, voters passed a constitutional amendment limiting statewide elected officials to two four-year terms and lawmakers to two eight-year terms in office. The limits forced all top statewide officeholders and about one-third of the legislature out of their current posts.

These latest poll results are similar to those published about a year ago. ■



MESSAGE FROM THE NATIONAL DIRECTOR

Political Crime Pays

Two peas in a pod: Bill Clinton and Dan Rostenkowski. You might not think so at first, but they are. Their appearance is different—Clinton

the smooth-talking Rhodes scholar and Rostenkowski the Chicago-tough, deal-cutting politician.

But they are both career politicians whose loyalty, in the end, goes not to the country or the people, but to their gang of career politicians.

We've heard enough blather about Bill Clinton's narcissistic search for a legacy. Well, for my money he cinched it when he gave a presidential pardon to Dan Rostenkowski. What a powerful statement to the nation that political crime pays! Clinton—in addition to his own notorious shortcomings—will forever be Rostenkowski's partner in crime.

Rostenkowski ripped off the public from his lofty 36-year perch on Capitol Hill. He pled guilty to two

felony counts of mail fraud to escape from 15 other felony indictments. The judge who sentenced Rosty to prison said, "The guilty pleas don't reflect the breadth of your crimes."

Don't get me wrong. Forgiveness is a wonderful thing. Had Dan Rostenkowski shown remorse for his widespread criminal enterprises in Congress, a pardon might have been warranted. But Rosty never apologized. He said, "I don't think I'm isolated as the only one who did it. I'm not completely convinced that what I did was wrong. Dispensing gifts to some friends and hiring the children of others was my way of life."

Some way of life!



continued from page 1

for U.S. Term Limits, traveled to Phoenix where he spoke to the press about the political superciliousness of the legislators, noting that while they are supposed to work for the constituents who elect them, they instead try to maintain their own careers.

The *Arizona Republic* wrote, "It may be possible to restrict the number of consecutive terms a state legislator can serve, but there is no limit to the average politician's ar-

rogance."

In Utah, a bill sailed out of a House committee just weeks ago, but stalled under pressure from U.S. Term Limits and a local Utah term limits group headed by activist Bart Grant.

Utah Senate President Al Mansell told the *Salt Lake Tribune*, "It puts us in a bad light to repeal a law that was so heavily supported by the public when it initially passed. It would be wrong for us to move forward."

Recognizing that public support remains high for term limits, the sponsor of the bill admitted he would resist efforts to revive it, noting that support in the legislature was far from solid.

In late December, a *Deseret News* survey found that nearly 70 percent of Utahns support term limits and want the law to remain untouched. Under current law, term limits will take effect in 2006, limiting the most powerful bloc of long-serving Utah lawmakers.

NO UNCERTAIN TERMS
FEBRUARY 2001 • VOLUME 9 • NUMBER 2

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A Publication of
U.S. TERM LIMITS and
U.S. TERM LIMITS FOUNDATION
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No Uncertain Terms is published 12 times a year at an annual subscription price of \$30. Third class postage paid, Washington, D.C. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to U.S. Term Limits.

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The Privilege of Serving the Public

By John Derbyshire
National Review Online

Remember term limits? Perhaps you don't. They were a big issue, at any rate with the Vast Right-Wing Conspiracy types I hang out with, back in the early 1990s. The idea was, that U.S. senators and congresspersons should only be able to serve a prescribed number of terms — two being the most popular number. The clamor for term limits subsided considerably, at least among the VRWC cadres, after the 1994 congressional victories. It turned out to have been one of those whose-ox-is-being-gored issues — urgent when the other party has all the committee chairs, but much less so when you yourself are in the ascendant. It also turned out to be a bit like pacifism: viz., it only works if everybody subscribes to it. If only *some* people subscribe to it, they soon find themselves in a fatally exposed position relative to nonsubscribers.

Term limits actually exist at a lot of levels below the federal: New York City Council, for example, which is the legislative body for Pyongyang-on-the-Hudson, has been term-limited since 1993. At the federal level, however, the only branch of government to accept any term limits is the executive, and that only for the presidency (the 22nd Amendment).

The thing that brought term limits to my mind was the sight of all those senators lined up for inspection at the confirmation hearings. What a crew! The collective noun for U.S. senators, if there was one, would be a "pomposity" of senators, or a "smug-

ness" of senators. The smuggest and most pompous of all, the ones whose glow of self-satisfaction could, if hooked up to transcontinental high-tension cables, have solved the California power crisis, were the ones who have served longest — Orrin Hatch (since 1977), Ted Kennedy (1962).

OK, it's an exclusive club, and OK, there is a case for institutions like that. The kind of collective self-regard that was making me gag does at least offer the chance that the Senate will be somewhat above the political fray, doing the nation's business in a lofty ether of detached impartiality, undistracted by the squabbling factions below. Calvin Coolidge said that the Senate had only one rule of procedure, which was, that the Senate did whatever it felt inclined to do. If that's true, I rather like it: though the behavior of Senate Democrats at the time of the Clinton impeachment trial suggests that if the senators of Silent Cal's day really were reluctant to be herded like sheep,

their present-day counterparts are somewhat less so. Whatever: the oil of self-congratulation that was dripping down those committee desks last week was hard to look at without reaching for the barf bag.

I had better come out of the closet right now and tell you that I am a term-limits extremist. Senators, representatives, and even presidents — one term each, that's all I'd give them. I am aware of the arguments pro and con. If you are not so aware, you

continued on page 4

My own feelings about term limits spring from the conviction that an entrenched political class gathering to itself wealth, favors and ever more power, is such a great evil that it is worth a small diminution in our freedoms — in the freedom to vote for anyone we please, that is — to prevent its development.

continued from page 3

can find plenty of material on the Internet by keying “term limits” into your favorite search engine. This is, as you will see, a meaty issue, with big, solid arguments on both sides.

The best con argument is actually a libertarian one: Why legislate to force people to do what they can perfectly well do on their own initiative — get rid of incumbents? The late Malcolm Muggeridge claimed that he invariably voted against whichever party was in power, on the principle that since voting our rulers out of office is the only really distinctive right that citizens of a democracy have, we might as well try for it at every opportunity. If everybody followed this stirring example, my dream would come true without benefit of constitutional tinkering. My own feelings about term limits spring from the conviction that an entrenched political class gathering to itself wealth, favors and ever more power, is such a great evil that it is worth a small diminution in our freedoms — in the freedom to vote for anyone we please, that is — to prevent its development.

I would, in fact, make an even wider case: Term limits on government employment. This is a trickier proposition to work into practical policy — what, for example, are you going to do about the military? — but I think there should be some way to prevent people making careers in government work, even at the lowliest level. Lifetime employment in government feeds the “iron rice bowl” mentality, which is a total negative for our society and culture.

I have a neighbor who works part-time as a substitute custodian for the local school district. He has to call in at 1:30 pm every day to see if one of the custodians is off sick. If so, he gets a few hours work. He organizes his whole life — he has a full-time job at a car dealership — around these occasional opportunities. Why bother? I asked him. He: “Are you kidding? I’ve got a foot in the door! If a vacancy comes up for a full-time custodian position, *I’m on the list!* They pay *twenty bucks an hour!* You

can’t get fired! The benefits are *GREAT!*” There are probably millions of Americans like this, spending their days and nights dreaming of a life in government work. It’s ignoble. It’s un-American.

Did I say “government work?” I’m sorry: I should, of course, have said “public service”. That is the conceit of these people — the government people. They are “public servants” — “privileged”, as they always say, to be mere butlers, footmen, housemaids and tweenies* to you and me. We’ve been hearing a lot of this PubServPriv baloney these last few weeks. Clinton, of course, gushed in all his numerous farewell speeches about how grateful he was to have had the “privilege” to “serve.” This is a man who has got seriously rich without ever having had a job outside the public sector. Some butler! Conservatives come out with this stuff, too, though: John Ashcroft himself, in his concession speech to the people of Missouri, spoke of, yes, the “privilege” of “serving the people”.

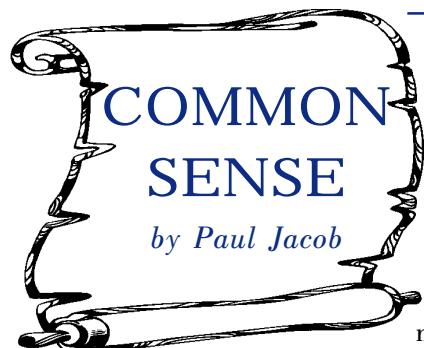
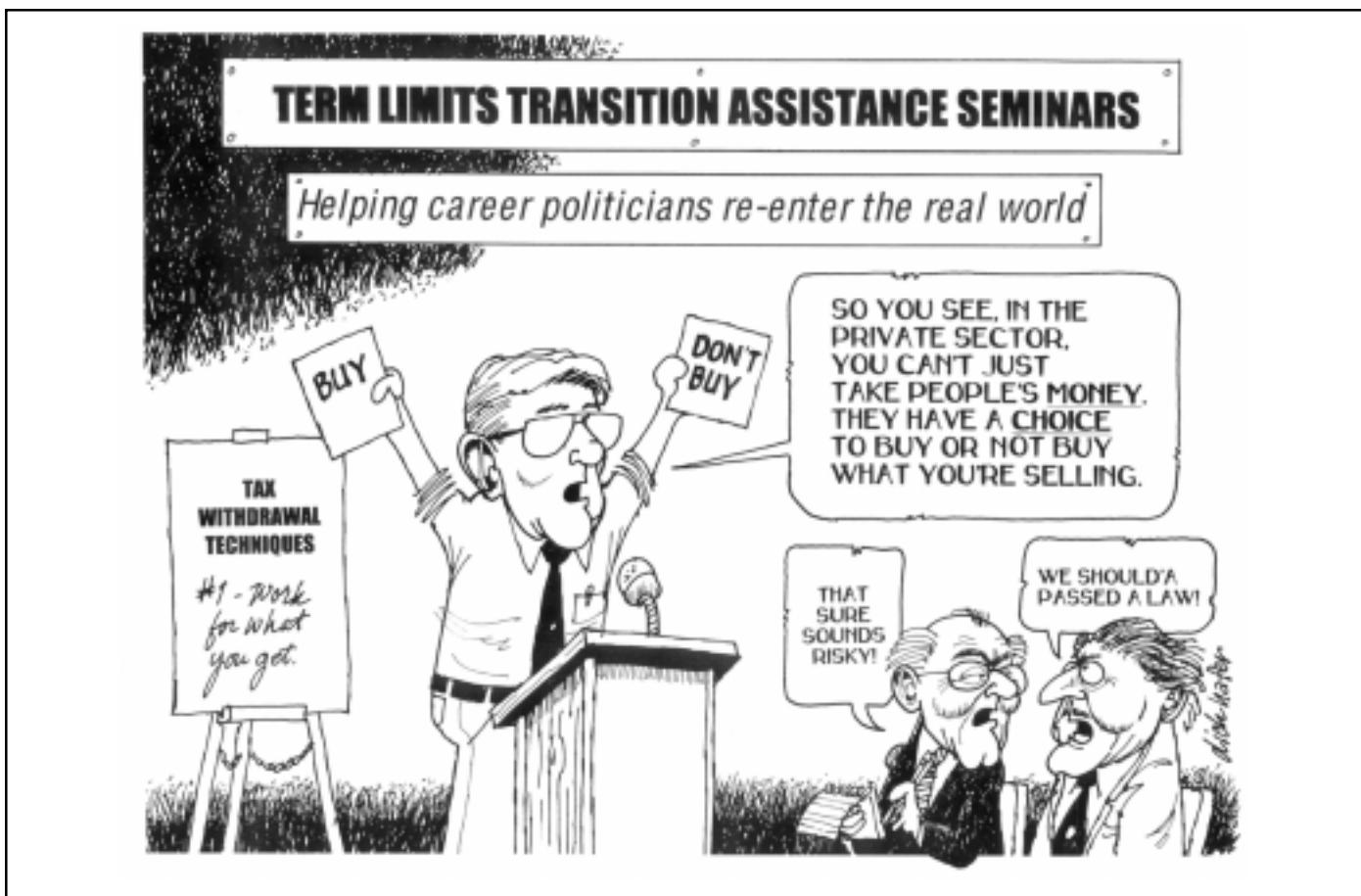
I am not, I hope, the bitterest of cynics. I do not doubt that there is some portion of sincerity in all these protestations of humility from the guys with the chauffeured limos and six-figure pension plans. In the particular case of ex-Senator Ashcroft, I note in fact that he pledged, on first going to the U.S. Senate in 1995, to limit himself to two terms. That’s still one term too many, but hey, the man’s heart is in the right place. When a man like

Dick Cheney, who obviously knows all there is to know about making money in the private sector, takes time off to do a government job, I applaud him for it, and give him all the benefit of the doubt as to motive. The Cheney spirit, in fact, is exactly what I would like to see more of.

For every Dick Cheney there is, of course, a legion of Hatchets, Thurmonds, and Kennedys. Down below the elected level, the legion is a mighty host. ■

—Excerpted from *National Review Online*

* A tweeny was a servant girl who ranked between the housemaid and the cook. I am the last person in the Western world that knows this.



THE WEEKLY RADIO COMMENTARY OF THE U.S. TERM LIMITS FOUNDATION

New Boss, Old Boss

Buh-bye. Congressman Bud Shuster of Pennsylvania is resigning.

Shuster was just spanked by the House Ethics Committee for breaking various rules. But his real crime is playing the same games all the career politicians play.

Shuster is neck-deep in the corrupt Big Dig project in Boston and he's pushed terribly wasteful pork-barrel bills through the Transportation Committee he chaired. He has even bribed his colleagues by offering \$25 million extra tax dollars for the district of each member of Congress who sanctioned all the pork.

How has Shuster been able to keep schussing down the track of the irresponsible career politician? In 28 years, he's never had a competitive race for his solidly GOP seat, was often never even opposed for reelection. But now, after having just won his seat yet again, he quits.

Why now?

Well, it finally dawned on him that the term limits passed on committee chairmen back in 1994 are going to stand. So he's collecting his marbles and going home. Shuster had hoped for some sort of waiver from the GOP leadership to allow him to thwart the limits and stay at the pinnacle of power.

But there is another reason too. Shuster plans to keep this seat in the family by handing it to his son. Had Shuster Senior resigned before the election, there would have been a very competitive race for this seat. Thanks to the timing, GOP insiders, not the voters, will choose his replacement.

Say hello to the new boss, same as the old boss. ■

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THEY SAID IT

Unexpected Candor

“This ought to be a part-time gig. It ought not be a career.

—Minnesota State Senator Dave Johnson,
in the Minneapolis *Star Tribune*
February 4, 2001

Dunagin's People



Positives Prevail

“The positives [of term limits] outweigh the negatives. If myself and the others who imposed term limits on ourselves had been planning long-term careers in Congress, we would not have been able to accomplish what we did. As it was, we didn't fear losing an election. It helped me to be a more honest broker and represent my constituents.

—Former Arizona Rep. Matt Salmon,
in the Arizona Republic
January 30, 2001

The politicians know the choice of the American people. They know what Americans want, and want by overwhelming margins; that is, meaningful term limits.

—Arkansas *Democrat Gazette*
February 2, 2001

Increasing Diversity

“The [Michigan legislature's] black caucus now has 22 members, compared to 16 in the 1999-2000 session. It gained additional power after 6 blacks were among 21 new House members elected last year to fill seats opened by term limits.

—*The Detroit News*
January 30, 2001

A Crop of Fresh Faces

“Term limits for committee chairmen in the House of Representatives mean a crop of fresh faces will be crafting important legislation this year. . . . New faces chairing congressional committees can mean new solutions to old problems.

—*National Review Online*
January 23, 2001

PERSPECTIVE

Celebrating the 22nd Amendment

For over 150 years in the United States, presidential term limits were a time-honored custom. George Washington stepped down from office after two terms, as did Thomas Jefferson after him. This tradition lasted until Franklin D. Roosevelt managed to win the presidency four terms in a row. Although Roosevelt died well before completing his final term, Congress decided to codify the principle of presidential succession by proposing the 22nd Amendment to the United States Constitution in March, 1947. This amendment states that no person can hold the nation's highest office for more than two full terms.

The 22nd Amendment finished the ratification process almost four years later, on February 27, 1951, when Minnesota became the 36th ratifying state. Ever since then, we've been assured that no one can hold the office of the presidency for very long.

Since this month marks the 50th anniversary of this remarkable amendment, U.S. Term Limits hopes everyone will join us in celebrating the principle that stands behind it — that no one should be able to hold onto political power indefinitely. ■

AMENDMENT XXII

Section 1. No person shall be elected to the office of the President more than twice, and no person who has held the office of President, or acted as President, for more than two years of a term to which some other person was elected President shall be elected to the office of the President more than once. But this Article shall not apply to any person holding the office of President when this Article was proposed by the Congress, and shall not prevent any person who may be holding the office of President, or acting as President, during the term within which this Article becomes operative from holding the office of President or acting as President during the remainder of such term.

The Trust Committed to Me

Representative
Mark Sanford

Foreword by Robert D. Novak

A Testament to Principle

**An excerpt from Rep. Mark Sanford's new book:
*The Trust Committed to Me***

“ Citizen legislators come fresh from real life with its high burden of taxes and regulation. Thanks to their fresh perspective, they will demand that bureaucrats either show tangible, beneficial results or close up shop. They will show their colleagues and staff how to conduct themselves with respect for the institution, the Constitution and the people. And they will demand and vote for reforms that limit congressional terms, balance the federal budget, and return to the American people the rights and freedoms that have been usurped over the decades. ”

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THE LAST WORD

Bye-Bye, Old-Boy Network

The GOP revolution of the early '90s re-energized the term-limits movement in this country.

It only took seven years to resurface at City Hall, championed by perhaps the youngest politician in the city's history, Republican Michelle Polgar.

Polgar, the only female in an elected leadership position in Orange City, said term limits would encourage more women and minorities to run for office — especially women.

As Orange City grows and its demographics change, term limits will nurture a more-representative government, she said.

Bye-bye, old-boy network.

"Term limits are about the breakdown of career politicians, people being on the council for so long," she said.

It's still early. The council decided this week to appoint a committee to study term limits as part of a review of the city's charter.

That means the issue will pop up again in coming months.

A cap on the number of terms would require an amendment to the

city's charter.

Polgar pointed out that DeBary and Deltona both limit the number of consecutive terms their elected officials serve to two.

Judging from comments at a recent council meeting, the issue could be contentious.

Harold Casteel, who is finishing the end of his second term this year, worried that term limits would limit the already small number of individuals who run for office.

"On every corner, I see guys saying they want to be on the council," Casteel joked sarcastically.

One council member noted that Vice Mayor Carson "Al" Blue Jr. ran unopposed last year.

Blue, elected to his fourth term on the council last year, said he supported the idea of one person not serving on the council for "eons."

Mayor Ted Erwin, just elected to his first term in that position, served two other terms as a council member.

Polgar and the other three council members are serving their first elected terms. ■

Reprinted from the *Orlando Sentinel*

Ads Praise Self-Limiters

Retiring from the U.S. House of Representatives after voluntarily promising to limit their time in Congress, self-limiters John Baldacci of Maine, John Thune of South Dakota and Matt Salmon of Arizona are considering seeking higher office as their term limits pledges come due.

In recognition of their dedication to term limits, U.S. Term Limits Foundation debuted new television ads earlier this month, praising their efforts. The ads state that these representatives are "not like other politicians" so they never became part of the Washington insider system. Retired citizen legislator Salmon responded to the ad by saying, "It's really nice, but it's also sad that when a politician finally keeps his word people think it's praiseworthy."

Like other self-limiters, these three representatives believed in making government accountable to the people, instead of the people being accountable to the government. ■

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FEBRUARY 2001

A PUBLICATION OF U.S. TERM LIMITS

TERMS

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