

## POWER PROBLEMS

### Study Demonstrates Declining Electoral Competition

As politicians repeat their tired and untrue mantra that term limits have lost support, the Cato Institute has released another study avowing the continuing importance of term limits. Although politicians would love to believe that term limits support is waning, studies continue to show that this particular reform is sorely needed in government today.

The recent release of Cato's Policy Analysis "Election 2002 and the Problems of American Democracy," by John Samples and Patrick Basham, provides evidence of the declining competitiveness of elections, a problem that term limits has been shown to help alleviate time and time again.

Cato's study shows a "renewed decline in public trust in the federal government." This is hardly surprising, as federal officeholders are more entrenched in their careerist brand of politics than ever. The longer the politicians stay in power, the further they stray from the concerns and ideals of their constituency — and the closer they embrace the special interests.

Peter Hart, a Democratic pollster, says, "It comes down to one simple theme: people feel this is a time we need checks and balances." Term limits offers exactly that.

There has been such a decrease in the number of competitive elections that



Ross K. Baker, professor of political science at Rutgers University, states, "Many voters lack any real say in who represents them." How can this be healthy for a democracy? While incumbents are receiving contributions from a network of donors whose investment in grooming politicians' careers guarantees "continuing financial commit-

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### MR. BIG SHOT

## Career Politics Breeds Arrogance

Commenting on the recent congressional pay raise, Rep. Dick Armey (R-TX) said, "I don't know why anybody in America would say, 'Mr. Big Shot, get yourself elected to Congress,' and then be stupid enough to deny yourself the pay and benefits that your job warrants."

A congressman since 1985 and the current House Majority Leader, Armey goes even further in justifying the latest in a long string of pay grabs, calling the

public's expectations of fiscal restraint in their elected officials "unrealistic."

Although his defense of this latest pay raise is unfortunate, it's interesting to note that Armey has begun speaking his mind about a variety of issues now that his retirement is imminent. The *Columbus Dispatch* has called him "increasingly independent and willing to take on the Bush administration and his party." Thomas Mann, a politi-

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## MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

# Rattling the Cage in Idaho

As everybody who follows politics understands, incumbency offers an electoral advantage to the incumbent politician, independent of the incumbent's performance — and regardless of the level of government. Incumbents have the ability to raise a substantially greater amount of campaign funds; they have better name recognition; they have access to taxpayer-funded assets like franked mail and the use of private television and radio stations. These types of advantages are simply unavailable to challengers.

For example, Idaho House Speaker Bruce Newcomb, who led the charge to kill term limits this past legislative session, hasn't even had a challenger in recent elections. The sheer weight of incumbency typically scares off any viable competition. In Newcomb's district and others throughout Idaho, electoral competition is DOA.

Yet, when term limits are in effect, statistics show that electoral competition is very much alive. And for traditionally disenfranchised challengers like women (who, although comprising 51 percent of the population, have held only a fraction of elected offices at all levels of government), this is great news.

In California, for example, an increase in turnover and electoral opportunities has resulted in a marked increase in diversity across the board — gender diversity, ethnic diversity, and occupational diversity.

A few years ago, Professor Mark Petracca of the Department of Political Science at University of California, Irvine, found that even before term limits kicked into effect the mere *prospect* of term limits had led to more rapid turnover, resulting in noticeable opportunities for women and minorities. In fact, on average, women made up about 15 percent of the California Assembly from 1980 to 1990. That average jumped to about 25 percent for 1991 to 1995.

Other studies have shown that it's also easier to ascend

to positions of leadership when you don't have to sit on the back bench year after year. Under term limits, Maine and Oregon elected their first women speakers. Without an entrenched incumbent monopoly to deal with, it's just easier to make a bigger dent, and faster.

By contrast, in states without term limits, legislatures see far less turnover and fewer open seats. New Jersey, for instance, has fallen from 10th in female representation back in 1974 to 43rd today.

In Idaho, men currently control more than two thirds of Idaho's legislature. Only about 29 percent of House members are women. And only 17 percent of Senate members (six out of 35) are women.

Those percentages are higher than they used to be. But if more Idaho women are currently inclined to become engaged in politics than there were in, say, 1970 or even 1980, then we are justified in asking why the percentages of female representation have not grown faster. And that delay in catching up to social realities surely has something to do with the political calcification induced by incumbency.

The very prospect of term limits has rattled the cage in Idaho. The good 'ole boys in charge want the rattling to stop, hence their anti-democratic attack on the right of Idaho voters to the citizen initiative process.

This November, Idaho voters will have a chance to repeal the term limits repeal. If Speaker Newcomb and his good 'ole boys in the legislature succeed in killing term limits, that might be "good" for them in their own political hierarchy. But it would be bad for those of us all around the country — men and women — who want more opportunities to participate in our own government, both as voters and as representatives. ■

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# Mark Sanford Succeeds by Breaking All the Rules

by Fred Barnes, *The Weekly Standard*

September 16, 2002

The peculiarities of Republican Mark Sanford's bid for governor of South Carolina are piling up. Sanford has no statewide campaign organization or ancillary groups like Veterans for Sanford. His wife Jenny is his campaign manager. When the state Republican chairman wanted to speak to him without his wife on the line, Sanford hung up. He doesn't prepare for televised debates (and does poorly). Hit this summer with a two-month barrage of attack ads by Gov. Jim Hodges, his Democratic opponent, Sanford declined to rebut the charges, thus violating a cardinal rule of electoral politics. His appearances sometimes consist of a slide show (he travels with a slide projector). He once jotted down the text of a TV ad minutes before filming it. His speeches are seldom scripted. He rarely wears a tie. He backed John McCain in the 2000 presidential primary in what turned out to be a strong George W. Bush state. He now concedes the McCain endorsement was a "mistake." There's an upside to all this. Voters are captivated by Sanford's unorthodox style. With no previous political experience, no following among Republicans, and zero name ID, he won a U.S. House seat in the coastal Charleston area in 1994. Sanford faced no opponent in his last two races, but nonetheless honored his promise to serve only three terms and retired in 2000. In the runoff last June for the GOP nomination for governor, he overwhelmed Lt. Gov. Bob Peeler, who was backed by most of the Bush forces in the state. Now he has an even or better chance of ousting Hodges. If he does, it's likely to be one of the few Republican pickups of a governorship this year. And it would give the GOP full control of South Carolina — the governorship along with both houses of the legislature.

Sanford, 42, is far and away the most interesting conservative running anywhere this year. His message is mildly radical: slow the growth of government, overhaul the bureaucracy, attract investment, and create jobs. He also favors a school voucher program similar to one enacted in Florida by Gov. Jeb Bush. But that's not the radical part of Sanford's agenda. This is: He wants to eliminate the state

income tax (top rate 7 percent). No state has ever repealed its income tax (several states don't have one). Sanford would not do it abruptly, but over 18 years. Still, he alone in the seven-candidate Republican field advocated it. All Hodges says is that he won't raise taxes.

**[Former Rep. Mark] Sanford faced no opponent in his last two races, but nonetheless honored his promise to serve only three terms and retired in 2000.**

In his slide show, Sanford presents a sophisticated analysis of how South Carolina has fallen behind in personal income — or what he calls a "wealth gap" of \$5,800 a year between what people make, on average, nationally and what they earn in South Carolina. Unless the gap is closed, he says, young people will continue to migrate to other states. While income has lagged, Sanford says, the state govern-

ment has metastasized, growing more rapidly than the federal government or nearby state governments. South Carolina has nearly twice as many state employees per capita as Florida. To lure investment and white collar jobs, Sanford would trim state government and reduce the tax (the top tax rate applies to incomes as low as \$11,701) that supports it. Meanwhile, education spending has doubled in the past 25 years, but SAT scores in South Carolina remain stuck at 49th or 50th among the states. Sanford says this means money isn't getting to teachers and classrooms.

Education, however, is Hodges's issue, not Sanford's. It provides "a stronger playing field for Democrats than Republicans, even on your best day," Sanford says. This is especially true in his case. For Sanford, education reform is but one part of his plan for restructuring state government. For Hodges, it's his most powerful issue and one on which he has credibility. As House minority leader in the state legislature in 1995, Hodges pushed for extending kindergarten from a half to a full day. Republicans sneered that this was glorified day care, but Hodges's proposal was wildly popular and he forced Republicans to back down. His bill passed.

Now he is trying to bludgeon Sanford on the issue. Since Sanford won the GOP runoff on June 22, Hodges has aired an estimated \$2 million worth of negative ads — many on

*continued on page 4*

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*"The Uncandidate," cont. from page 3*

education — that declare Sanford “wrong for South Carolina.” Sanford’s limp response prompted Brad Warthen, the editorial page editor of South Carolina’s most important newspaper, *The State* in Columbia, to urge Sanford to stop talking about parental choice and offer up a comprehensive plan for improving public schools. Sanford may do that, but what he won’t do is broadcast rebuttal ads on TV.

The rule of thumb in politics is that a charge left unchallenged has a good chance of being believed by voters. Sanford doesn’t think so. His first TV spot of the general election campaign was a response, but hardly a point-by-point rebuttal. Referring to Hodges’s ads and speaking directly to the camera, he said: “I trust you will see those attacks for what they are. In the last four years, our economy has gotten worse and our schools still rank at the bottom. We don’t have to settle for that . . . help us bring a different approach to politics in Columbia.” The ad ends with a slogan: “Mark Sanford, a leader, not a politician.”

Richard Quinn, a consultant for a Sanford opponent in the primary, says Sanford’s style and persona may make him immune to negative ads. In the runoff, Lt. Gov. Peeler ran a TV spot showing a Sanford lookalike stripping a soldier of his rifle, uniform, and wallet. The point was to portray Sanford as anti-military. The ad backfired. Earlier, Quinn had produced anti-Sanford ads for his candidate, Attorney General Charlie Condon. “We pounded him,” says Quinn. The result was zilch.

“Mark is the most unorthodox politician I’ve ever bumped into,” Quinn says. “He’s unscripted. He likes to wing it. He doesn’t really have a consultant. There’s a real freshness about him. He campaigns on the notion that he’s a departure from politics as usual. He personifies that.”

One source of his appeal is term limits. In 1994, his strongest opponents balked at self-imposed term limits. Sanford settled on three terms. “Six years seemed like an eternity,” he told me. By rejecting a career in Congress, he acquired what he calls “the rarest of all political commodities in Washington . . . independence.” In a short book he wrote in his final year in Washington, Sanford said, “If self-limits do nothing else, they afford a legislator the freedom to stand up for what he believes.” In his case, it meant championing sweeping Social Security reform, voting against

highway spending, and rebelling against Republican leaders Newt Gingrich and Dick Armey. By quitting after three terms, Sanford gained a reputation for keeping his word, a valuable asset for a politician.

Back in Charleston in early 2001, Sanford was weighing job offers and thinking about running for Democratic senator Fritz Hollings’s seat in 2004 when he was visited by a Republican businessman from Spartanburg, John Rainey. Rainey knew Sanford only by reputation, but he felt Sanford was the only political figure who could disrupt the inertia in Columbia. “This is a person who, if you’re lucky, comes along once in a political lifetime,” Rainey says. He cited a passage in the New Testament, Luke 12: “Unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required.” Sanford was intrigued. He consulted two former governors, Democrat Bob Kerrey of Nebraska and Republican senator George Allen of Virginia, who assured him governor was the office with the most leverage. After working up his ambitious economic and restructuring plan, Sanford announced.

Outside Charleston, Sanford had no base of support. There’s no Sanford gang of allies in the legislature or GOP hierarchy. The Christian right, strong in the Greenville and Spartanburg area upstate, was leery of him. So were many Republicans who’d backed Bush over McCain in 2000, a contest whose traumatic effect on the GOP still lingers. But the McCain link didn’t hurt Sanford, except to underscore his image as a different sort of politician. “I’m inherently distrustful of the inside of any political system,” he says. Five weeks after the runoff, Bush showed up for a Sanford fund-raiser that had been scheduled before the election, when Peeler, the Bush candidate, had been expected to win. “When you find a good one, you’ve got to help him, and you’ve found a good one in Mark Sanford,” the president said.

Besides his personal attractiveness, Sanford has a geographical advantage against Hodges. The governor, wrote Lee Bandy of *The State*, “is boxed in from the north and south. The vote-rich Upstate is solid Republican territory. . . . The coast and Lowcountry are home to Sanford.” That leaves the middle of the state. All Sanford has to do is split the vote there and he wins. Not a bad spot to be in for a candidate who likes to wing it. ■

Reprinted from *The Weekly Standard*  
*Fred Barnes is executive editor of The Weekly Standard.*

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*"Mr. Big Shot," cont. from page 1*

ical scientist with the Brookings Institution, says, “It’s as if Dick Armey has been liberated.” Even Terry Holt, a spokesman for Armey, agreed that the congressman might be putting his views forth “more forcefully.”

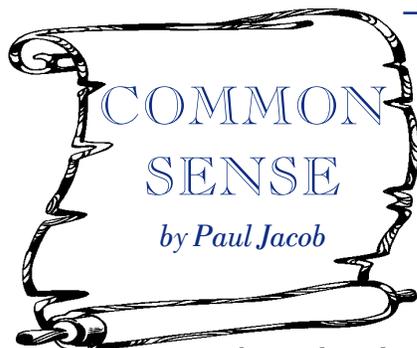
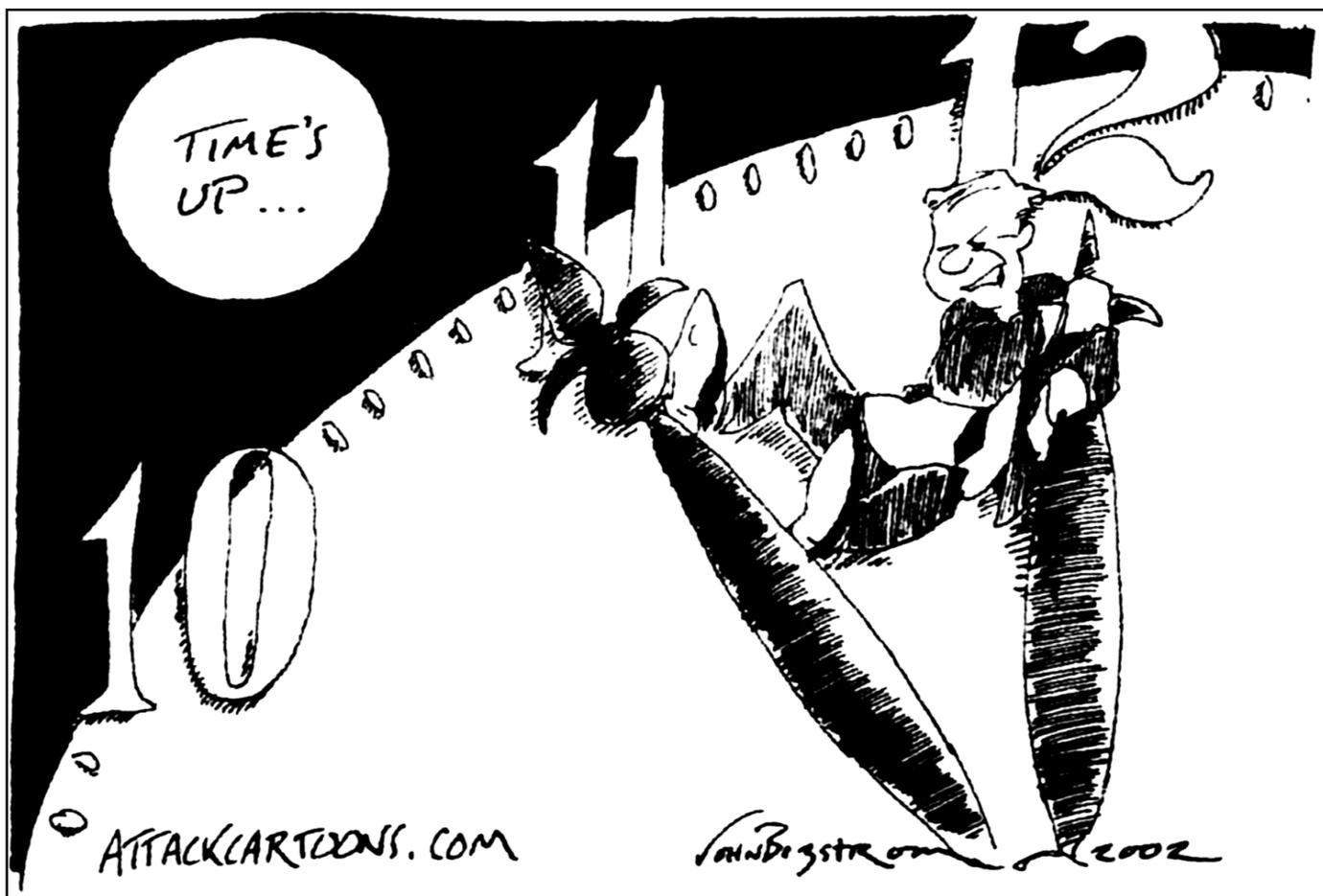
This transformation can be attributed to the simple fact that Dick Armey is no longer preoccupied with reelection.

Without the monkey of perpetual incumbency on his back, he’s begun to assert his own views and take a stance on tough issues.

Term limits advocates have known this secret for years — when your time in office is limited, you have the courage to take action and speak your mind.

Term limits free politicians from subservience special interests and party

politics. Instead, they allow legislators to speak their minds on delicate but important issues without worrying about retribution by donors or sponsors. Legislators can better serve their constituents if they refrain from making politics a career — serving the people who elected them rather than the special interests who contributed the most money. ■



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

### Weldon Welshes

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Dave Weldon, M.D., wants to be re-elected to his seat in the U.S. House. Congressman Weldon seems like a nice enough guy. Just one problem. He's term limited. Self-term-limited. In 1994 Dr. Weldon made a promise to his constituents that he would serve no more than four terms at the most.

Therefore, this is the last term Weldon can serve without breaking his pledge to Florida voters. Yet he is running for re-election anyway! Does he not understand the meaning of integrity?

Weldon explains that term limits are losing favor. Which, if true, wouldn't get him off the hook. But anyway, it just isn't true. You could say that term limits are "losing favor" among career politicians, but they never supported term limits to begin with.

And most voters around the country still support term limits by wide margins. In Florida, more than 75 percent

of the public remains in favor.

Weldon should follow the example of fellow Floridians Tillie Fowler and Charles Canady. Or he could emulate a fellow M.D., former Congressman Tom Coburn. Watching Coburn on the House floor, you'd never imagine he'd welsh on a self-limit pledge.

In the *San Francisco Chronicle*, Debra Saunders reported on Coburn's integrity. She wrote, "Guess what, America. They don't all lie." And she noted that having kept his word on term limits, Coburn was also more likely than many congressmen to push Congress to keep its word on issues like spending caps.

Maybe Dr. Weldon should give his conscience a checkup. ■

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## THEY SAID IT

### Term Limits for DAs

“ [David Ottke, executive director of the Colorado Term Limits Coalition,] said he thinks district attorneys should be term-limited because they have ‘an enormous amount of power in making decisions about the lives of individuals within their district.

‘In other words, I feel that over time there tends to be a good-old-boys network that develops,’ said Ottke. ‘What they tend to do over time is to favor the politically powerful, the wealthy and tend to go after the less wealthy.

‘They make decisions based on politics rather than the merits of the case,’ he said.”

—*Denver Post*  
September 19, 2002

### Embracing Term Limits

“ Idahoans have twice embraced term limits. It is time for the opponents of term limits to graciously bow to the decision of the people.

In its Sept. 6 editorial, the *Statesman* asks why I take the position I do. It strikes me that, after Idahoans have made their wishes so plain, it is the *Statesman*'s position on term limits that requires an explanation. . . .

The incumbent protection racket has created a seniority system that thrives on special interests that cluster around the queen bees of Congress, feeding them the money-honey and controlling their votes.

The result is that very few candidates can run an effective campaign against an incumbent member of Congress. Unlike challengers, incumbents legally campaign on the public dime.”

—Betty Richardson, congressional candidate  
*Idaho Statesman*  
September 10, 2002

### Younger Candidates

“ At least 15 twentysomethings are seeking election to the 110-member [Michigan] state House.

And they have good chances of making it in as term limits and redistricting force many seasoned legislators into retirement.

‘They have an opportunity now that wasn't there before,’ said Craig Ruff, president of Public Sector Consultants, an independent think tank based in Lansing.”

—*Lansing State Journal*  
September 24, 2002

### Tom Tancredo, Pledge-Breaker

“ [Rep. Tom Tancredo (R-CO)] did more than sign [a term limits pledge]. He was an aggressive apostle of term limits in Colorado, preaching the concept with messianic fervor when it was all the rage on the conservative side of the aisle. He cited his commitment to term limits while running against several Republicans seeking the 6th District nomination. . . .

Now, like the town drunk who's wandered into the temperance tent and reveled in the adulation accorded him for signing the pledge, Tancredo has figuratively tipped his hat — and stumbled down Main Street to the nearest saloon.”

—*Denver Post*  
September 27, 2002

### Term Limits Make Legislatures Look More Like America

“ All across America, over 58 million Americans live in localities with term limits of various sorts, and more than 17,000 politicians serve in 2,890 term-limited cities, counties and towns. There are local-level term limits in some form in 40 states, from the smallest towns to the largest cities.

Term limits are intended to end careerism among legislators and politicians. According to studies done by the Cato Institute, another honorable non-profit national organization, ‘. . . Term limits increase legislative diversity . . . Making the legislature closer to the private sector also familiarizes legislators with the complex consequences of laws and regulations. Overall, a state legislature composed of average citizens is a legislature that looks more like America and less like a political class of arrogant and ambitious politicians intent on self-aggrandizement.’

Don't be fooled by spurious arguments that our present legislators are the only smart or dedicated people in Idaho. It simply is not true. Whether you do or don't want term limits, at least your decision should be based on the facts, not on some flaky sales talk by selfish interests.”

—Reader Opinion, *Idaho Statesman*  
September 9, 2002



**Paul Jacob**  
U.S. Term Limits  
Senior Fellow

## Which of These is Most Outrageous?

The longer politicians stay in office, the more likely they are to abuse their power and betray the voters. Here are three recent examples of career politicians in action, from the best of Paul Jacob's Common Sense radio commentaries. **What do you think? Which of these is the most outrageous?** Send us email at [newsletter@termlimits.org](mailto:newsletter@termlimits.org) or drop us a note in the mail to the return address on this newsletter. We love feedback, and hope to hear from you soon.

### Congressional Decision

Our country faces a national security crisis over how to deal with Iraq.

So where is Congress? Spouting platitudes and cowering in corners.

Congressman Ron Paul of Texas has a question. "[M]ost in Congress would support an invasion of Iraq, so why can't we simply agree to follow the Constitution and vote to declare war?"

I agree, but let me be clear: I'm not making an argument to go to war with Iraq; just that our Constitution gives Congress the responsibility of deciding the question of when to declare war. But Congress doesn't fulfill its constitutional role.

Because that involves taking a stand. Taking political risk. But they want the usual free ride: to be able to delegate power and money willy-nilly, grab credit when something works, blame others when it doesn't.

Congressman Paul wants to know "why members of Congress from both parties, most of whom work incessantly to increase the scope of congressional powers, suddenly refuse to wield power in one area where they have legitimate legislative authority? It mostly has to do with cowardice and politics," says Paul.

This is the deal: Congress won't declare war and won't officially protest the lack of a declaration of war. They will vote to fund the war. And they will wave the flag and brag if it goes well, complain if it does not.

Congress has huge power and almost zero responsibility. A career politician's dream. ■

### Padlocking Your Vote

Campaign time again. A good time for you to ask politicians what they really think about your vote.

In states where citizens have the initiative, 24 of them, legislators are doing their darnedest to regulate the process out of existence. And where states where there is no citizen initiative, legislators sure would like to keep it that way. Seems the politicians want you to vote this November, but only if you're voting for them.

Dane Waters, president of the Initiative and Referendum Institute in Washington, D.C., has been one of many voices crying out against heavy-handed regulation of the initiative process. According to Waters, this anti-voter regulation is responsible for a 30 percent decline in the number of initiative questions posted to state ballots.

The initiative process allows citizens to gather petition signatures from their fellow citizens in order to place measures directly on the ballot to be decided in a statewide vote. Or to put a law passed by the legislature up to a vote.

The process brings more voters to the polls. Initiative states have a four percent higher turnout in presidential years and an eight percent higher turnout in non-presidential years.

But many legislators want to deny voters the chance to decide issues that affect voters' lives. They say voters don't know enough to decide complex issues. On the other hand, we're supposed to be clairvoyant when it comes to deciding which blow-dried politician is more honest than the other blow-dried politician.

Voters aren't perfect, but if you had to be perfect to participate in government, every legislature in the country would be padlocked. ■

### Where's the Algebra?

The test results are in and the students passed. But our educational system flunked — big time.

I'm talking about an algebra test taken by every eighth grade student in Maryland. And the students are doing extraordinarily well on this test.

Still, some ask: "Where's the algebra?" University of Maryland mathematics professor Jerome Dancis calls it "pretend algebra." Tom Lovelless, director of the Brown Center on Education Policy deflates our hopes even more when he observes that "A lot of algebra courses aren't really teaching algebra."

Sensing a trend here? No need to investigate further, because Maryland state education official Gary Heath admits the test is a scam: "We would be the first to tell you that it doesn't have a lot of algebra, nor was it intended to."

Pardon me, but why would someone give a test on algebra that didn't have algebra on it? Answer: the better to create our stupid utopia!

Doesn't add up. When we want to teach our kids  $x + y$ , our educational system gives us phony algebra classes. And when we seek to measure how well kids are learning this alleged algebra, our educational system gives us phony tests.

Mr. Heath says, "Our long term goal is to raise that bar and the next level would be to have a full-blown algebra test."

That's for the future, of course. For now, the Maryland Department of Education will be administering their zero-beef algebra exam. The one without any algebra. ■

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## **INTEGRITY COUNTS**

# Former Self-Limiters All Win Gubernatorial Primaries

Since February we profiled six former congressmen who have all honored their pledges to limit their time in office. All six are running for the office of governor in their respective states.

John Baldacci (D-ME), Van Hilleary (R-TN), Steve Largent (R-OK), Bob Riley (R-AL), Matt Salmon (R-AZ), and Mark Sanford (R-SC), were all victorious in their states' primary elections.

John Baldacci had no serious opponent and walked away with the nomination, receiving 94 percent of the vote. Van Hilleary received a solid 64 percent. Steve Largent had no serious challenger and received 87 percent. Pre-primary polling predicted that Bob Riley would

compete in a tight race and possibly face a runoff, although he received an overwhelming 74 percent of the vote. And both Matt Salmon and Mark Sanford received solid majorities, with 56 percent and 60 percent respectively.

For more information on their campaigns, visit the following web sites:

[www.baldacciforgovernor.com](http://www.baldacciforgovernor.com)

[www.vanhilleary.com](http://www.vanhilleary.com)

[www.largentforgovernor.com](http://www.largentforgovernor.com)

[www.bobrileyforgovernor.com](http://www.bobrileyforgovernor.com)

[www.salmonforgovernor.com](http://www.salmonforgovernor.com)

[www.sanfordforgovernor.com](http://www.sanfordforgovernor.com) ■

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*"Power Problems," cont. from page 1*

ment," contribution limits imposed on challengers reduce the likelihood that incumbents can be defeated. This advantage of incumbency deters qualified challengers from declaring candidacy in the first place. In this way careerism is born.

The study points out, "Term limits constitute an attempt to overcome the problem of the costs of the incumbent advantage." As politicians become their own class with their own set of interests, term limits is an effective way to eliminate the rift between legisla-

tures and citizens.

Cato quotes George F. Will's suggestion that "term limits are needed as an auxiliary precaution against the perennial lust for power," and goes on to observe that "Overall, a Congress composed of average citizens would be a Congress that looked more like America and less like a political class of arrogant and ambitious politicians intent of self-aggrandizement."

The problems with the dynamics of present-day Congress are obvious. As incumbents become nearly unbeat-

able, their accountability to voters wanes and the voices of Americans are stifled. The will of the voting public can't be truly expressed in a government that artificially consists of the same faces year after year. Cato's study shows that as term limits produce an "increased turnover of representatives and senators" they would also produce "better choices for voters." As the reign of the perpetual incumbent dissipates, qualified challengers are more willing to run for office, while voters gain better representation. That sounds like healthy democracy. ■

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