

## MUGGER OF THE YEAR

### Idaho Anti-Term-Limits “Leader” Gets Pat on the Back

“That was fun, can you beat me up and grab my wallet again?”

We don’t normally expect victims of crime to applaud the guy who did it. If you’re mugged, you’re upset about it. But at least once the mugger has done the deed, he runs off and you never see him again. You certainly don’t have to worry about possibly reading in the paper some day about how your assailant received a Mugger of the Year Award from the National Council of Muggers.

But seems the citizens of Idaho — recently robbed of the term limits that they voted into law in 1994 — are not to be spared this indignity.

Since Idaho’s term limits law took the form of a statute rather than a

constitutional amendment, state legislators were able to scuttle the law unilaterally. This was done, of course, as a job-saving measure and after every other possible expedient had been attempted at the ballot box and in the courts. Alas, again and again the voters affirmed at the ballot box that yes, they did mean what they said when they voted for state legislative term limits. And the State Supreme Court affirmed that yes, the term limits law was indeed perfectly constitutional.

So only when no option remained — neither electoral nor judicial — did the career politicians of Idaho, led by Speaker of the House Bruce Newcomb, mug the voters and steal term limits,

even overriding a gubernatorial veto to do so — and despite the clear conflict of interest involved. After this unilateral repeal of the term limits law, a referendum in Idaho on repealing the repeal seemed to narrowly uphold what the politicians had done; but it was clear from press reports that many voters had been confused by the deliberately confusing wording of the referendum.

The “extraordinary courage” of Newcomb’s last-ditch, anti-democratic power-grabbing is now being honored by the National Conference of State Legislatures, the State Legislative Leaders Foundation, and the Council of State Governments. On July 29, they

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### Voters Should Be Disgusted With California Politicians, Says Sowell

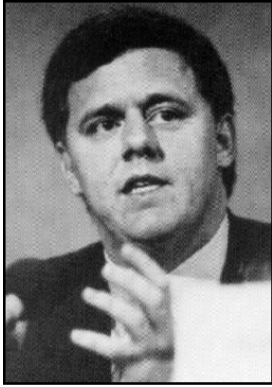
“Voters ought to be disgusted, disgusted. With the state’s financial disasters and Californians fleeing to other states by the hundreds of thousands, you might think there might be something more serious to discuss than Schwarzenegger’s private life, his movies or his father’s politics.

The old ‘lack of experience’ game that politicians like to play against any newcomer doesn’t have quite as much weight any more, when you see what a monumental mess the experienced, lifelong politicians like Governor Gray Davis have made. There could even be a lesson here for people in other states. When politicians talk about being ‘experienced,’ the question should be asked: Experienced in doing what?

In deceiving the public? Evading responsibility? Claiming credit for what happens that is good and blaming others for whatever happens that is bad? Experience in spin or smoke and mirrors?”

—Thomas Sowell, *Townhall.com*

September 3, 2003



## MESSAGE FROM SENIOR FELLOW PAUL JACOB

# Oh Those Crazy Michigan Lobbyists

Michigan has hit the jackpot when it comes to dumb sayings about term limits by lobbyists who hate term limits.

Sure, all anti-term-limit lobbyists tend to say the same dumb things about term limits — whether pining for the ancien législatif régime of Oklahoma or of Arkansas or of California.

But Michigan lobbyists are particularly good at the dumb sayings. Or at least their dumb sayings are particularly well reported by the press. My clippings of these, if stacked one on top of the other, would rise higher than the federal deficit if you stacked the federal deficit using blow-dried one-dollar bills.

In 1998, a Detroit paper reported that some legislators being kicked out of the Michigan House were ending up in the Michigan Senate. Lobbyist Bill Rustem complained that if the goal of term limits was “fresh faces, it didn’t work.”

A few years later, this same Rustem was telling reporters that Michigan was careening toward a “time of incredible uncertainty where it’s difficult to predict what will happen when you lose the experience and institutional memory” of various elected officials. Uh oh. So now, too many fresh faces, huh?

In 2002, a lobbyist for the Michigan Education Association named Al Short announced that thanks to term limits,

“skilled lobbyists . . . have far more power than ever before.” So, term limits: bad. And how very public-spirited of Mr. Short, so eager to give back all that new power he’s gotten as a result of term limits! Just like all the other 80 percent-plus of lobbyists who oppose term limits.

Another Michigan lobbyist quoted in the same story, Richard Cole with Blue Cross/Blue Shield, and a leader of one of those periodic efforts to repeal term limits that occur every year or two in states with term limits, opined that the legislature had been weakened by the term limits law insofar as many of the new legislators take “four years to figure out where the men’s room is.” Why do I suspect that what Mr. Cole really meant was: “The new legislators don’t jump fast enough when I snap my fingers!”?

Some Michigan lobbyists don’t like it when advocates of term limits oppose the opposition of lobbyists to term limits. A few such lobbyists have even assumed the dour garb of ministers of speech.

Last year, Blue Cross of Michigan got miffed when radio ads sponsored by a term limits organization advised voters that Blue Cross was working to kill the state’s legislative term limits. Leaping into action, Blue Cross representatives called radio stations to urge them not to air the ads. They then faxed an “Advisory to Station Managers” asking them to “consider refusing to run this ad.”

The advisory contended that Richard Cole’s efforts to

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**Michigan voters don’t share the disdain for term limits that obtains among many lobbyists and politicians. In a 2002 survey of 400 likely voters, conducted by Basswood Research, most respondents were supportive.**

## NO UNCERTAIN TERMS

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# Why the Media Blame Term Limits for California's Budget Debacle: Term Limits are Stealing Away Long-time, Comfy Sources from Lazy Journalists

by Jill Stewart, *JillStewart.net*

May 15, 2003

Led by the editorial writers and reporters at the self-deluded Los Angeles Times, a media pile-on is underway to blame “term limits” for the incredible dysfunction we are witnessing in the Sacramento legislature.

I hope thinking journalists will help put a stop to this budding case of journalistic malpractice before its foolish mantra spreads to the rest of the sheep in my profession, as they plop onto their comfy duffs and congratulate themselves for playing no part in the debacle.

If the media dared to look in the mirror for a change, they would see that “term limits” are not to blame for gridlock over the \$38.5 billion budget deficit, or the blatant pay-offs to political donors now being made as the Legislature proposes laws that often worsen the crisis.

As many researchers note, the most virulent opponents to term limits are political staffers, lobbyists and journalists—the three groups who make a living off being insiders and abhor the risky work of regaining the trust of a new crowd of politicians every several years.

But the media shamefully refuse to admit their bias.

Thus we see the spectacle of a major paper like the Times (but the Orange County Register and others are nearly as bad) which in recent days ran a purported “news” story examining the crazy quilt of 50-plus fees Democrats want to slap onto everything from diapers to light bulbs in response to the Republicans’ steadfast refusal to raise taxes to plug the deficit.

In explaining the underlying cause for the fiasco in Sacramento, the sole outside expert quoted by the Times stated, “Term limits are coming home to roost.” This Berkeley professor blamed Republicans, declaring that because there is no way for Republicans to retake the majority in Sacramento, they have “no incentive to be reasonable. Particularly if you are looking for your next job.”

This unsupportable claim about what motivates the minority party in the post-term limits era was not countered

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*“Crazy Michigan Lobbyists,” cont. from page 2*

weaken the term limits law were not done on behalf of Blue Cross. (For more information on Cole, see four paragraphs ago.) Yet as he led the assault on term limits, Cole had repeatedly identified himself by his Blue Cross title, “Senior Vice President for Corporate Communications” — including in signed columns attacking term limits. If Cole had been faking his relationship with Blue Cross during all the time in which he was trying to kill term limits, or inappropriately exploiting that relationship, you’d think Blue Cross would have blown its lid at Cole, not advocates of term limits. But I am rehearsing mere facts and logic here.

There is a lot of competition in the dumb-statement category. The profes-

sors have put in a good showing too, for example.

Calvin College political science professor Jim Penning says that the anti-term limit brigade in Michigan should pray for a good scandal. Politicians and lobbyists may spend their waking hours plotting against the term limits law, but as the professor notes, the plotting just isn’t going so well.

“It will be very difficult,” he says. “Voters need to see the downside of term limits before they’re willing to change. . . . We just got a budget compromise, so government looks like it’s running pretty smoothly.” The horror.

But career politicians shouldn’t lose hope. “A major scandal might do it,” says the scholarly professor.

Of course, Michigan voters don’t

share the disdain for term limits that obtains among many lobbyists and politicians. In a 2002 survey of 400 likely voters, conducted by Basswood Research, most respondents were supportive. In 1992, the initiative setting limits of six years in the House and eight in the Senate passed with 59 percent of the vote. By 2002, 74 percent said they would vote for it if given the chance.

But the sad truth is that all too many “leaders” in both government and business couldn’t care less about public support for greasing the wheels of democracy, as term limits undeniably do. After all, their own personal convenience is at stake.

What are they supposed to be, statesmen? Heh. ■

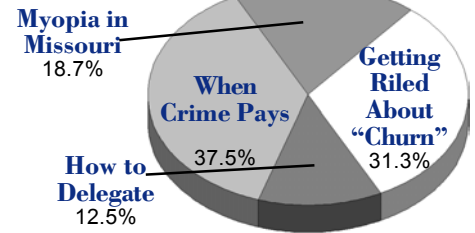
Originally appeared on *Townhall.com*



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

Here's how you voted last month . . .

## Which of These is Most Outrageous?



### Worse Than Davis?

The political future of California Governor Gray Davis is in jeopardy. And it seems he will say or do anything to save his job.

One thing he likes to say is that the recall effort is just an anti-democratic gambit of a few frustrated Republicans. This, even though hundreds of thousands of angry Californians signed the petition to put the recall measure on the ballot. Wow, that's a lot of Republicans for such a Democratic state.

Davis is not the only career politician who thinks voter control of government is a bad idea. You also have, as usual, all the career politicians in the term-limited state legislature. There's a lot of third-term assemblymen in California who have spent the last few months looking nervously at their watches.

Is it time to try once again to hoodwink California's voters with a new anti-term-limit measure? Could be. There's already a plan being bandied about on how to do it so that legislators now in their third term can stay in power.

The plan is to split up this year's primaries so that the presidential primary is held in March, but primaries for other political offices are held in June. A measure to water down term limits would appear on the March ballot. This way, if the politicians succeed in conning the voters in March, those serving their third and last term under the current term limits law will have time to file for the June primary. It's clever, except for one small point.

They forgot that the voters are smarter than they think. ■

### Nattering in Nebraska

There have been a slew of irresponsible governors lately when it comes to budget matters. California's Gray Davis comes to mind, as does Nevada's Kenny Guinn. So it is a pleasure to hear about those who at least try to say no to budget binging.

There are several examples of fiscally saner governors around the country. But the one I have in mind is Mike Johanns of Nebraska. Governor Johanns recently vetoed an irrationally exuberant \$5.4 billion two-year budget plan, including some \$344 million in tax hikes. The governor wanted deeper spending cuts and fewer tax increases, the exact opposite approach of the Davis-Guinn axis.

Unfortunately, the Nebraska legislature overrode the governor's veto. But at least he raised a standard to which the relatively wise and honest could repair. The odd thing is that his veto was defeated with the help of some who supposedly "support" the governor's fiscal common sense.

A certain Senator Jim Jones supported the override, which means he voted in favor of the reckless spending and tax hikes. At the same time he tells reporters, "Some way or another we're going to have to get on top of this. We're headed for a train wreck the way it is now."

Well, this is so much nugatory nattering. If you know the train is headed for a wreck what you do is stop the train, Mr. Jones. At the very least you yell at the conductor. You don't say, Well, all right, let's keep going and maybe somehow we can avert danger at the last possible moment. ■

### A Blunt Instrument

Two things. One, making legislation in the Congress is like making sausage — or pork. There's a don't-ask, don't-tell policy about the messy method by which bills get written and passed.

Two, homeland security has become one of the biggest donkeys on which congressmen pin the tail of special favors for special interests.

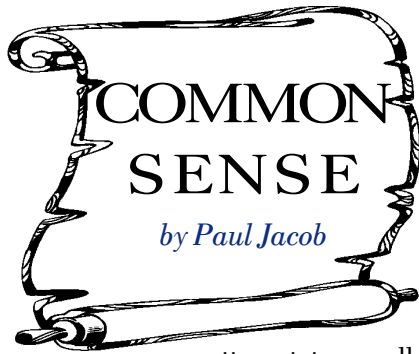
So demanders of handouts now claim that the same old handouts they've always wanted are critical for homeland security. Or maybe they just hope that their designated legislative assistant sneaks an amendment into the homeland security bill.

But now and again somebody gets caught trying to "abuse the system," which is what congressmen call it when somebody is particularly brazen about doing what they all do anyway.

The latest perp is Congressman Roy Blunt, the new Majority Whip, who tried to sneak a provision benefiting Philip Morris into a fat bill creating the Department of Homeland Security. The tacked-on legislation would have made it harder to sell cigarettes over the Internet — sales which cut into Philip Morris's profits. Coincidentally, Blunt gets campaign contributions from Philip Morris and even has a son working for the company.

This kind of cozy mutual back-scratching is not at all unusual in the culture of Washington, DC. But I guess the legislation-padding was a bit blatant this time around, because even his fellow Republicans pretended to be disturbed by Blunt's blunt maneuver.

The anti-compete-with-Philip-Morris amendment was promptly pulled. But I have a feeling it hasn't quite gone up in smoke. Not yet. ■



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

**Recall Terminates Taxes**

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We've all been told that the attempt to recall California Governor Gray Davis is wild and crazy. Not so many realize that the state's voters have probably already benefited just from having the recall measure on the ballot.

But Michael New of the Cato Institute has noticed. New notes that with a \$38-billion deficit hanging like smog over the California legislature, those who wanted taxes to go through the roof had a lot of leverage. Yet the eventual budget compromise wasn't anywhere near as tax-happy as some had feared.

Why not? New says that a couple factors prevented the super-tax-hikes. One is California's super-majority requirement to pass tax hikes. If all it took in California to boost taxes were a simple majority of the legislature, the pro-taxers would probably have won hands down. But the

anti-taxers stood their ground.

New believes that, "In the end, it was the recall effort that saved California taxpayers. With Davis's popularity hovering at Nixonian levels, Davis and Assembly Democrats realized that any substantial tax hikes would damage his chances of surviving the recall. Consequently, they were more willing to agree to a budget compromise that did not involve a substantial tax increase." I agree with New that Democrats probably would have been more stubborn about tax hikes without this political reality punching them in the nose.

This argument isn't quite new with New. The citizen initiative has always given voters greater control over their government. A good thing, too. ■

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**Tell us what you think!**

**Which one of the commentaries on page 4 is most outrageous?**

**Worse Than  
Davis?**

**Nattering in  
Nebraska**

**A Blunt  
Instrument**

**Or do you prefer the commentary on this page?**

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*"Media Tedium," cont. from page 3*

in the Times by an outside expert who might actually grasp the facts.

Balanced observers correctly blame what is unfolding in Sacramento on a nasty phenomenon known as "redistricting."

Redistricting is a practice in which the majority party—the Democrats for now—draws up boundary lines that create the voting districts in which we all live, and sometimes even bother to vote.

Two years ago, the California Democratic Party created a new set of districts for California cynically designed to end competition for legislative seats. In short, they stole the democratic voting process away from the people. They did this by carefully drawing bizarrely configured districts around enclaves of Democrats and cutting out neighborhoods with too many pesky Republicans, thus ensuring a Democrat is elected.

It wasn't done just for Democrats. This was the final flourish on a long effort by both parties to end cross-party competition in California. The Republicans got their own so-called "safe seats" in the sleazy bargain.

California voters realized back in the 1990s that under "redistricting" they were being force-fed an increasingly narrow selection of party-approved automatons. So in the late 1990s, voters approved the open primary initiative. It allowed Democrat voters to cross over to vote for interesting Republicans and Republicans to cross over to vote for interesting Democrats, as in many states.

Experts say that thusly freeing up voters encourages moderates to run, and stymies the parties' effort to stack the statehouse with unthinking partisans.

But the parties couldn't have that. The Democratic Party sued to halt the California open primary. They lost in lower courts but finally won before the Supreme Court. (However, the justices pointedly stated an open primary is not forbidden for California—just reword the law next time.)

Nick Tobey, chairman of Californians to Protect the Open Primary, says, "the media are blaming term limits because issues like redistricting and the open primary are complicated and bore the media. Reporters have not fully reported to the public that the politicians now choose their voters by drawing their own districts, or even what a district is."

Term limits play a role in Sacramento, but I say it's mostly positive. Shame on the media for saying term limits are the root of the evil.

Darry Sragow, a respected Democrat strategist and managing director of the public policy consulting firm Public Strategies, says the effects of term limits are subtle.

"Because members are limited to just six years in the

Assembly, it's too short a time to create a powerful Assembly Speaker, so you end up with 80 assembly members acting as their own power centers. Yes, it's inherently less efficient to make every member more independent of the Speaker than they used to be. But you could argue that that's exactly what voters had in mind with term limits."

I argue precisely that. If a powerful Speaker who controls assembly members were a healthy way to get rid of sellouts and blowhards in the Assembly, Californians would not have used term limits to drive out Speaker Willie Brown and his ilk.

Brown turned the Assembly into his fiefdom and spawned so much disastrous policy that by the time Brown was forced out in 1996, California was left with the worst schools, worst workers compensation system and most abused welfare and public healthcare systems in the nation, to name a few horrors.

Strong-man governing and permanent incumbents created each of these nightmares, and also built the lopsided state tax structure that relies on the hope of stock market booms and fueled our vast budget deficit. Longtimers also forced through energy deregulation in 1996 even though lazy, biased

media love to inaccurately blame new, term-limited legislators who'd just arrived.

Ratcheting up its attack, on May 9 the L.A. Times' editorial writers blamed term limits for the shameless buying and selling of votes in Sacramento.

They were miffed that Mercury Insurance Group, a huge contributor to liberal Democrats like Alameda's Senator Don Perata and L.A.'s Assemblyman Dario Frommer, got these men to sponsor custom bills to let Mercury draw customers away from competitors and let agents collect fat new brokers' fees.

I contacted a Chief of Staff to a Democrat member of Congress in California, to ask how the big boys explain the blatant peddling of votes.

This Chief of Staff was incredulous about the media bias against term limits, saying, "Every member of the California Congressional delegation understands that what is happening in Sacramento is caused by the Democrats' abolishing of meaningful general elections in California, both at the state and Congressional levels, and not by term limits," said this powerful Democrat.

As this Chief of Staff noted, "The only two groups the legislators need to please now are big-money funders of their primary races, and the lunatic fringe who show up to vote in the primary races. Wake up!"

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**Term limits play a role in Sacramento, but I say it's mostly positive. Shame on the media for saying term limits are the root of the evil.**

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## Lobbyist Shenanigans Par for the Course

A “seat at the table” in Washington DC often comes at a price.

The chance to look over congressional shoulders as congressmen draft legislation affecting your industry is not a courtesy extended impartially to all comers. If you funnel money into the campaign coffers of pivotal legislators, you have a better chance to get that seat at that table. In some cases the exchange amounts to a direct bribe.

All this is well known in the corridors of power. It is par for the course. But the bribes and favor exchanges are supposed to happen by a more circuitous and ambiguous route than sometimes turns out to be the case. So when a blatant instance gets exposed, all the major players feign shock and surprise, as if something out of the ordinary were taking place.

Westar, a Kansas corporation, was caught coughing up big bucks in an effort to obtain just such a seat at the table. It’s all laid out in black and white in an internal company memo. According to this memo, authored by Westar Vice President Douglas Lake, the firm sought a special exemption in a pending energy bill and was willing to pay to get it. The money went to the big-shot congressmen Tom DeLay, Joe Barton and Billy Tauzin, and from there it was funneled to sundry incumbents facing tough reelection bids.

Congressman Joe Barton did indeed introduce the provision Westar was seeking, but then yanked it when the feds began investigating the company. And all the parties involved are pretending that it is incredible that anybody should consider them to be complicit.

“We have no control over any fantasies they might have about what they might get for a contribution,” said a DeLay spokesman.

Congressman Joe Barton’s spokeswoman reported that, “absolutely and unequivocally” there was “no quid pro quo.” And a spokesman for Congressman Billy Tauzin advised the world that “No one on our committee is going to risk going to jail over a campaign contribution.” (Who, us? We just work here.)

The Westar executives got in trouble. But the worst that will

happen to the spoken-for congressmen is a rebuke from the ethics committee. And they’ll all get reelected on schedule.

Just business as usual — politics as usual — in the nation’s capital.

A few years ago, a drug company lobbyist named Terry Lierman made a \$25,000 loan to six-term incumbent Congressman Jim Moran. Moran then supported legislation being pushed by Lierman. Both of these men were Democrats. So Republicans in the Congress cried foul as all the Democrats in the Congress just shrugged their shoulders and said it’s no big deal.

Republicans were right to push for an investigation. But they were hypocrites for ignoring the machinations of their own Bud Schuster, whose dealings with a lobbyist also violated House rules but resulted in nothing more than a slap on the wrist. Beyond that, of course, Schuster is a flagrant pork-barreler and favor-trader. But that is just the very standard *modus operandi* of the career politician, and not *per se* against House rules.

The New York Times recently published a story reporting on the lobbying side of a big interested group, the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA). It is supposed to be horrifying news that this organization sets aside big money to fund an “intellectual echo chamber of economists—a standing network of economists and thought leaders to speak against federal price control regulations through articles and testimony.”

So these scoundrels spending money to defend themselves against legislative bullying by promoting the facts about the destructive effects of price controls, eh? I guess we’re supposed to believe that an economist’s views are tainted if he’s paid to testify to what he already believes — the destructive effects of price controls. Presumably any physicist paid to testify to the dangers of falling rocks must also be suspect.

But there would be no need for businessmen to spend millions to defend their rights if career politicians weren’t always flexing their muscles in a permanent protection racket. ■

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*“Mugger of the Year,” cont. from page 1*

gave something called the William M. Bulger Excellence in Leadership Award to Bruce Newcomb. Not for anything honorable or commendable, but *specifically for leading last year’s anti-democratic charge to kill voter-enacted term limits in Idaho.*

We wish we were putting you on. We’re not putting you on. You can visit the web site of the National Conference of State Legislatures <<http://www.ncsl.org/programs/press/2003/pr030729.htm>> and read the press release for yourself. Idaho’s most infamous mugger of democracy is receiving a Mugger of the Year Award.

Marty Linsky, former Massachusetts state legislator and chair of the

misnomerously named Excellence in Leadership Award selection committee, gloats that Newcomb “put his position and his career on the line in the interests of what he believed was necessary to preserve the legislature as a full partner in governance, opposing a governor of his own party and challenging a public that had twice approved term limits in a referendum.”

Hip. Hip. Hoorah.

Except that Linsky’s statement is false. The jobs and political interests of Idaho’s political monopolists were already on the line. And Newcomb’s vaunted “leadership” consisted merely in making explicit his already-existing contempt for democracy and the voters.

The operative words in Linsky’s

carefully nuanced encomium are “position,” “career,” “preserve,” and “full.” Newcomb, and all the other colluding incumbents in Idaho, were concerned above all to maintain their positions — in power. They were eager to maintain their political careers — in power. They wanted to preserve — their power. And they, Newcomb and Linsky are full — of it.

Along with the award, Newcomb received a check for \$10,000, to be made out to the charity of his choice. Send us your suggestions as to which charity should receive the check, and we’ll print the best suggestions in a future issue. (Sorry, we’ve checked; there is no such organization as Career Politicians Anonymous.) ■

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*"Media Tedium," cont. from page 6*

Why can't the media get it right? Because they are so very culpable.

Except in smaller media markets like Fresno, the media refuse to cover the democratic process. They give only cursory coverage to state legislative races and the world inhabited by individual state legislators. The public hasn't a clue what kind of turkeys represent them. This is entirely the media's fault.

State Assemblyman Keith Richman, who is among a handful of emerging moderate Jewish Republicans in California, is an exception to the turkey rule.

He and moderate Democrat Joe Canciamilla, and ten or so others in Sacramento, are not afraid to upset the special interest groups and fringe voters who now control primary races. The Richman-Canciamilla group is fashioning a bipartisan budget fix sure to upset everyone.

Richman does wish term limits in the Assembly were lengthened from six years to eight to match the Senate, but says the media "is just wrong putting its key focus on term limits."

Says Richman, "If the open primary had not been invalidated by the Supreme Court we would not have this dysfunction. If the parties had not drawn safe seats to make the general election irrelevant we would not have this dysfunction. Our political leaders would be more from the center—like California voters really are."

Every day, Richman watches as Sacramento lawmakers "are pushed to support the extremes and are very, very unlikely to go against any special interests who can take them out in the next primary. I cannot tell you how hard it was to simply put in place a process to talk across the aisle."

Canciamilla says change is needed. Among other things, he'd lengthen the terms for legislators but ban them from switching later to the other house, whether Senate or Assembly, so they'd focus on their jobs instead of political ambitions. Far more radical, he'd create an independent

new legislative body and give it power to "look into and then sunset all these huge special-interest programs that do not deliver much. It would operate like that independent commission that closed all the unneeded military bases. Otherwise, this legislature will never cut those huge expenditures."

Media sheep also like to claim that California's term limits are to blame because legislators are too inexperienced to handle the complexities of Sacramento lawmaking. What an utter crock. If true, we wouldn't have the pathetic phenomenon in the Senate, where 40 politicians with an average of eight years in Sacramento (most came from the Assembly) for months could not face the deficit they helped create by approving mountains of costly special-interest laws.

Many senators continue the folly. Orange County's unimpressive Democrat Sen. Joseph Dunn had the gall to propose legislation in March to hand public safety workers a fat new 100 percent pension, as if the cushy 90 percent retirement pay they get wasn't already killing taxpayers. Did I mention that Dunn got \$20,000 in campaign funds from fire and police unions?

So the moment you hear the media blame "term limits," remember that in this case, reporters are the moral equivalent of lobbyists. They hate having to toss their Rolodexes every six years and persuade powerful new people to trust them.

That's why lobbyists spent millions fighting California term limits, and, unlike the conventional wisdom states, hate them still, and why journalists are fomenting a media pile-on.

Lobbyists and journalists are supposed to be natural enemies, with one working in the shadows to get as many goodies as possible for its industry or pressure group, and the other trying to shine a light onto all that dark maneuvering. It's a sad day to see these two groups working toward the same dishonorable end. ■

Reprinted from *JillStewart.net*

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