



# A Case AGAINST Term Limits

## Term limits come with unexpected consequences:

- ◆ The Articles of Confederation, our first Constitution, had term limits, but experience led the Founders to omit them in our current Constitution.
- ◆ South Dakota state legislature has lost "institutional wisdom" because of term limits.
- ◆ Term limits deny the voter the liberty to re-elect his or her choice. We are throwing the baby out with the bathwater.
- ◆ If Members of Congress were termed out, their staff would simply move on to another congressman. Influential staff is not termed. Neither are lobbyists nor unelected bureaucrats.
- ◆ Congress has only an 18% approval rate, but a 96% re-election rate. Why do we continue to re-elect them? A well-informed electorate is necessary to demand adherence to the Constitution and accountability!  
([tinyurl.com/3ahbcpwv](http://tinyurl.com/3ahbcpwv) and [tinyurl.com/mw29rhvf](http://tinyurl.com/mw29rhvf))
- ◆ In a lawmaker's final term, no longer believing he is accountable to his constituents, he might promote objectionable policy and accept favors from lobbyists.
- ◆ The best term limits are elections.

**We "termed" Sen. Tom Daschle (D-SD) out of office by exposing his voting record, and we had a good candidate to replace him. We "termed" Sen. George McGovern (D-SD) too.**

## The Founders' Wisdom:

- ◆ James Garfield (20<sup>th</sup> U.S. President)  
"Now more than ever the people are responsible for the character of their Congress. If that body be ignorant, reckless, and corrupt, it is because the people tolerate ignorance, recklessness, and corruption."
- ◆ Gouverneur Morris of Pennsylvania stated at the 1787 Convention, "Term limits tended to destroy the great motive to good behavior, the hope of being rewarded by re-appointment."
- ◆ Alexander Hamilton wrote in Federalist #72, "Nothing appears more plausible at first sight, nor more ill-founded upon close inspection [than term limits]. One ill effect of the exclusion would be a diminution of the inducement to good behavior."
- ◆ "[T]he people should be at liberty to choose the ablest and best men - yet, upon the present [term limits] supposition, the people voluntarily resign this right, and shackle their own choice." -John Adams (2<sup>nd</sup> U.S. President)

