



Constitutional Amendment

Subject: Naming Restrictions and Congress

Text:

“No federal building, base, facility, park, roadway, transportation hub, military weapons system, project, program, or any other entity or object funded in whole or part by the United States Government shall be named in honor of a Member of Congress or close family member before twenty years shall have elapsed from the Member’s last day in office.”

Reform Category(ies):

- ☒ Anti-Corruption, Transparency, Accountability
- ☐ Counter-Majoritarian Requirements
- ☐ Democratic Processes
- ☐ Enhanced Rights/Protections
- ☐ Limits to Political Power/Immunities
- ☐ Necessary Clarifications
- ☐ Responsible Government
- ☐ Separation of Powers/Check and balances

Branch(es) targeted:

- ☒ Legislative ☐ Executive ☐ Judicial

Justification:

Naming rights are a commodity, in the public sector just as in the private sector. For politicians, having an entity or object named in their honor offers short-term campaign benefits as well as reputation enhancement over the longer-term (which itself can be monetized for personal gain).

A “cooling off” period following Congressional service would decrease the rewards for corruption in federal naming procedures and allow decision-makers some historical perspective to determine the worthiness of a proposed beneficiary.

Alternatives to Amendment?

Members of Congress are incentivized to continue support for the current less fettered naming-rights scheme, even if they and their allies won’t immediately benefit from it. For lobbyists, it is

a useful tool. There are, from time to time, Congressional voices raised in opposition, but they tend to be partisan complaints about a particular beneficiary, not the system itself.