

# Representatives must have term limits

At the time of the founding of the U.S. Constitution, presidents, representatives and senators did not have established term limits. However, as the early days of that republic faded away, so did many traditions and points of views set forth by our Founding Fathers.

Debates over term limits served by those in power have been around since the early days of the nation. According to a Gallup poll conducted in September 2016, Congress has an approval rate of 20 percent.

The low approval rate may be directly influenced by the fact that there is continually a poor voter turnout in the United States, which means that elected officials will not be able to properly represent the masses. Additionally, even if people do go out and vote, they tend to vote by party unless there is a challenger to the status quo.

Incumbents yield a natural advantage over challengers since they

have already been elected once and are believed to have experience. Incumbents are also privileged in that they have franking privileges, which allow them to send mail to their constituents without charge. The only logical answer to this problem is to enforce congressional term limits.

There are several benefits to limiting every career politician's terms of service to a maximum of two terms, or 12 years, in each chamber. In particular, there would be an influx of new members in Congress who would bring new ideas to the forefront.

Members of Congress who were elected decades ago may stick with stale ideas and not be able to connect with their constituents. This becomes an issue when members of Congress claim to represent a certain population but don't evolve along with it.

Another advantage of limiting the terms of career politicians would be leveling the playing

field for challengers. The privileges that incumbents possess do not allow for fair and free elections to take place, therefore turning congressional offices into re-election machines.

If term limits were imposed right now, 30 senators would have to resign in 2017, since they have been in office for over two terms. Additionally, 132 representatives would have limited terms come this January if members of the House of Representatives were also subject to a maximum of two terms.

It is obvious that the United States has a problem with term limits when it comes to any election. One of President-elect Donald Trump's first items on his 100 day agenda is to introduce term limits to members of Congress. Trump may be able to work with Congress to truly drain the swamp and bring about needed change.

-Andrew Windsor  
Political Science '19