

# PROPOSED AMENDMENT #3: FOR TERM LIMITS

## *As Described in the Act 2 Application:*

- (c) imposing term limits on members of Congress and of the judiciary of the United States;

## *Annotation Indicating Possible Integration with Other Article V Reform Proposals:*

Advocacy Groups with applications supported by this Act 2 reform are COS Project, US Term Limits, Americans for Congressional Reform, I Am American, and Term Limits for Congress.

## *Summary of the Amendment:*

Our proposal for congressional term limits would impose a lifetime limit, such as 16 years, for service by an individual in Congress. We propose that rather than fixing maximum terms for the House and Senate individually, the amendment provide for a maximum for *both chambers combined*. For example, a 16-year maximum would allow an individual to serve eight terms in the House of Representatives or five terms in the House of Representatives and one in the Senate or two in the House and two in the Senate. This would be more flexible and give voters more options than many other term limit proposals. When a term limit is reached, the member would finish out his current term before retiring.

We also support limiting each federal judge to a single long term (perhaps 16 years) for any one position. When the framers of the Constitution inserted life terms for judges, life expectancy was much shorter than it is today. The Supreme Court justices appointed in our first decade under the Constitution served for an average of eight years; today, the average is close to 25 years, and many judges remain in their positions for 30 years or more.

A single long term would preserve judicial independence, while reminding judges that they must eventually return to private life. Because most judges are

appointed when they are in their 40s or 50s, the single long term would help prevent judges from continuing after old age prevented them from acting effectively. It could also encourage presidents to nominate mature individuals whose judicial views were established and well known.

*Additional Background Establishing the Need for this Amendment:*

For a more vibrant and effective government, we must apply term limits to the judiciary and Congress. The increase in life spans over the years have made lifetime appointments of the judiciary inappropriate. Term limits on Congress would limit the power that may be built over a long tenure and introduce fresh thinking into our body politic. It will rejuvenate Congress.