



Senator Jane Timken

Sponsor Testimony: Senate Joint Resolution 6

Chairwoman Manchester, Vice-Chair Brenner, Ranking Member Weinstein, and members of the Senate Government Oversight and Reform Committee, thank you for inviting Senator Gavarone and me to share our testimony in support of Senate Joint Resolution 6.

Senate Joint Resolution 6 appeals to the United States Congress to call an Article V convention for the limited purpose of establishing term limits for members of the United States Congress.

Public support for term limits cannot be ignored. A poll conducted by U.S. Term Limits found in Ohio an overwhelming 78% of voters approve of a Constitutional Amendment to place term limits on members of Congress. Such strong public support illustrates the public's distaste for careerism in politics.

Term limits are not a novel idea. As members of the committee are aware, here in Ohio we have term limits. Two 4-year terms in the Senate, and four 2-year terms in the House of Representatives. And Ohio is not alone; 16 states currently have term limits for legislators.

Allow me to address some common concerns:

This resolution is not open ended; it appeals to the United States Congress to convene an Article V convention for the purposes of establishing term limits. This resolution specifically narrows the scope of the convention to that single subject. This will not be an open-ended, runaway convention.

Some may argue we do not need term limits because we have elections. Data suggests otherwise. Only about 10% of congressional races are truly competitive and 95% of federal incumbents win re-elections. PAC's give 90% of their federal money to incumbents and as a result, nonincumbents need to raise and spend tens of millions of dollars to win. Turn over in congressional seats was only 6% over 2014-2024. And in the 2022 midterms, every incumbent U.S. Senator who sought re-election retained their seat.

Another retort is that term limits would give more power to lobbyists, staff, and bureaucrats. This is untrue. There are over 10,000 lobbyists on Capitol Hill, and they do a lot of the work because many members have to spend a significant portion of time fundraising just to keep their seats.

Imposing term limits may loosen the pressure of reelection and allow members to do the jobs they were elected to do.

Implementing term limits would restore Congress to the citizen-led institution it was meant to be. Term limits would create more open seat elections, greater competition for those seats, and give voters more choices at the ballot box.

Twelve states have already passed this identical resolution. Article V requires 34 states to pass the resolution to trigger an Article V convention. Adding Ohio to that list will increase pressure on Congress to act.

Historically, when enough states support an Article V convention resolution, Congress acts. Congress preempted similar efforts to call a convention by passing the 17th, 21st, and 22nd amendment, limiting the U.S. President to 2 terms in office.

I am here asking for support to employ the tools our founding fathers gave us to ensure the United States Congress is of the people, for the people, and by the people.

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