Senators Theresa Gavarone and Jane Timken

Sponsor Testimony: SJR 6

Chair Manchester and members of the Senate Government Oversight and Reform Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on Senate Joint Resolution 6, legislation that would apply for a limited national convention for the very narrow and specific purpose of establishing term limits for congress.

In 1982, Marcy Kaptur won her first election, being elected to the U.S House of Representatives in what was considered to be an upset. Fast forward over 42 years later, Marcy Kaptur just won her 22nd term. You heard that right, 22 terms in Congress. Not only is she the longest serving woman in the U.S House, but Marcy Kaptur is among the most senior members of congress. Marcy Kaptur is not alone here; former Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi has been in Congress for 37 years and Senator Chuck Schumer has been in power for over 44 years. For three members to have a combined service time of over 123 years is absurd and not what the founding fathers had in mind when our country was formed.

Senate Joint Resolution 6 is very simple, it applies for a limited national convention only for the purpose of establishing term limits. That is it. We have heard of concerns regarding other piece of legislation that apply for a Article V Convention, with people bringing up the idea of a runaway convention. That does not apply here since we are only talking about term limits. In reality, if passed this would never get to a Article V Convention because Congress would act to create their own term limits before leaving it to the states.

Is this a partisan issue? The answer is very short - no. In fact, the vast majority of Americans support term limits for members of congress. According to a Pew Research Center poll, 87% of Americans support term limits, including 90% for Republican voters and 86% for Democratic voters.[1]

By requiring term limits for Congress, we would be moving the power away from Washington and putting it back in the hands of the people. Far too often, members continue to get reelected to just simply hold onto power, rather than focusing on moving our country forward. Furthermore, when you have members of congress who have been in power for decades, the incentive to accomplish tough issues dissolves. Look at Nancy Pelosi. She knows that every two years she will get reelected for another term regardless of what is accomplished. Now, if you had term limits, two things would happen. One, you would not have members serving for decades and getting rich off the backs of hardworking Americans. Two, term limits would incentivize members to get to work immediately because you know you have a fixed amount of time to tackle the tough issues.

By passing SJR 6, Ohio would join a growing list of states who have passed similar legislation, moving one step closer to bringing accountability back to Washington.

Chair Manchester, thank you for allowing us the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on SJR 6. We are happy to answer any questions you may have at this time.

1. https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2023/09/19/how-americans-view-proposals-to-change-the-political-system/