

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

HOUSE STATE GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON CAMPAIGN FINANCE & ELECTIONS
PUBLIC HEARING

MAIN CAPITOL BUILDING
ROOM B-31
HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 2021
9:00 A.M.

PUBLIC HEARING ON
ARTICLE V TERM LIMITS

BEFORE:

HONORABLE RYAN MACKENZIE, MAJORITY CHAIRMAN
HONORABLE MALCOLM KENYATTA, MINORITY CHAIRMAN
HONORABLE DAWN KEEFER
HONORABLE CRAIG STAATS
HONORABLE JARED SOLOMON

ALSO PRESENT:

HONORABLE SETH M. GROVE, MAJORITY CHAIRMAN
HONORABLE SCOTT CONKLIN, MINORITY CHAIRMAN
HONORABLE RUSS DIAMOND (VIRTUAL)
HONORABLE FRANK RYAN
HONORABLE MAUREEN MADDEN
HONORABLE BENJAMIN SANCHEZ
HONORABLE JOE WEBSTER
HONORABLE REGINA YOUNG

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SUBMITTED WRITTEN TESTIMONY

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(See submitted written testimony and handouts online.)

P R O C E E D I N G S

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3 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN MACKENZIE: I'll call this
4 meeting to order. If we can first please stand for the
5 Pledge of Allegiance.

6 (The Pledge of Allegiance was recited)

7 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN MACKENZIE: This morning's
8 State Government Committee meeting is a Subcommittee on
9 Campaign Finance and Elections Hearing on Article V Term
10 Limits, and specifically relating to Congressional Term
11 Limits. We have a couple testifiers joining us. And I
12 would like to note that we also did invite a Dr. Casey
13 Burgat from George Washington University to present the
14 other side. Unfortunately, he wasn't able to join here,
15 but we will solicit testimony from him, and we will then
16 circulate that to members if anything is provided.

17 Term limits on members of Congress is something
18 that I hear about often in my district, and our hearing
19 this morning will focus on the concept of congressional
20 term limits itself with an emphasis on the prospective
21 benefits or drawbacks, the impact of term limits in other
22 legislative bodies and in comparison to other proposals for
23 congressional reform. I want to thank our testifiers for
24 their participation as well as remind everyone that due to
25 the Sunshine Act requirements, if the virtual broadcast of

1 this hearing experiences any technical difficulties, we
2 will pause until those difficulties are resolved. And as I
3 understand right now, the livestream is up and working, but
4 again, if there are any issues, we will pause the meeting
5 at that point.

6 Before we begin, I would like to also note that I
7 have introduced House Resolution 57 on this topic of
8 Article V Term Limits here in Pennsylvania House of
9 Representatives. So with that I will call up our first two
10 testifiers. We have Kenn Quinn, who is regional director
11 of U.S. Term Limits and Mike Riley, who is a Pennsylvania
12 Legislative Advocate for U.S. Term Limits.

13 Gentlemen, if you can please join us. Thank you
14 gentlemen for being here today, and we're going to go
15 around and introduce members so that you're familiar with
16 everybody who's here in the room today. I'm Representative
17 Ryan Mackenzie from the 131st District in portions of
18 Lehigh and Berks counties, and I serve as the Subcommittee
19 Chairman for this subcommittee.

20 MINORITY CHAIRMAN KENYATTA: Good morning. I'm
21 Representative Malcolm Kenyatta from the 181st District in
22 the heart of Philadelphia. I'm the Democratic Chair of the
23 subcommittee and really look forward to your testimony
24 today.

25 REPRESENTATIVE STAATS: Good morning, gentlemen.

1 Craig Staats representing the 145th District in Bucks
2 County.

3 REPRESENTATIVE RYAN: Representative Frank Ryan,
4 101st. Mike, good seeing you again. And I was told I have
5 a booming voice, so I'm trying to tone it down. I don't
6 always hear myself, so thank you.

7 REPRESENTATIVE KEEFER: Good morning.
8 Representative Dawn Keefer from the 92nd District, York and
9 Cumberland counties.

10 REPRESENTATIVE MADDEN: Good morning.
11 Representative Madden. 115th Legislative District, Monroe
12 County. Thank you for being here.

13 REPRESENTATIVE SANCHEZ: Good morning. Ben
14 Sanchez from the 153rd District in Montgomery County.

15 REPRESENTATIVE SOLOMON: Good morning. Jared
16 Solomon, 202nd in Northeast Philadelphia.

17 REPRESENTATIVE YOUNG: Regina Young, 185th
18 District Philadelphia in Delaware counties.

19 REPRESENTATIVE WEBSTER: Good morning. I'm Joe
20 Webster. I represent the 150th in Montgomery County.

21 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN MACKENZIE: Great. Well, thank
22 you to everybody for being here this morning. In addition
23 to a lot of public interest, it seems like there's a lot of
24 interest from our membership, as well. The Subcommittee is
25 only consisted of a smaller number of members, but clearly

1 members from the rest of the Committee are interested in
2 this topic as well, so we're glad they're able to join us
3 here. So with that we'll turn it over to the two of you
4 and look forward to your testimony.

5 MR. QUINN: I apologize. I'll start again.
6 Chairman Mackenzie, Chairman Kenyatta, and Members of the
7 Subcommittee on Campaign Finance and Elections. My name is
8 Kenn Quinn. Thank you for this opportunity. Good morning.
9 And I appreciate the time we can spend here in the next few
10 minutes to discuss this very important issue.

11 I'm from Bridgton, Maine, and I'm here in support
12 obviously of congressional term limits. And one of the
13 main reasons for that is because, as it was mentioned
14 earlier, this is an issue that many, many people around the
15 country and in the state of Pennsylvania support. I just
16 want to reference two of the exhibits. I provided two
17 polls. One is the recent poll by Scott Rasmussen, which
18 was a national poll, and it shows that this issue, term
19 limits for Congress, is supported by 82 percent of the
20 American people, and that is 87 percent Republicans, 83
21 percent Democrats, and 78 percent Independents.

22 This is the number one issue in the country today
23 that spans the political spectrum for support, which is
24 what's required in order to have a successful amendment.
25 Here in Pennsylvania the numbers are very tight. It's 79

1 percent overall, and that's 78 percent Republican, 79
2 percent Democrat, and 77 Independents. That's just one of
3 the reasons we support this.

4 And the reason there is such high support among
5 the American people, it's simple. Congress is broken.
6 It's dysfunctional. See this on a daily basis. And this
7 is nothing new. This issue the American people have been
8 wanting for decades.

9 You may recall the 1990s 23 states passed laws
10 putting term limits on their own congressional delegations.
11 21 of those states the people actually voted for at the
12 ballot box. I'm from Maine. We voted for it twice. And
13 unfortunately, what happened was it got challenged. It
14 rose and went all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court. And
15 in 1995 the Supreme Court ruled against all 23 laws,
16 overturning those laws. And I provided the quote. This is
17 what the Court stated, "State imposition of term limits for
18 congressional service would effect such a fundamental
19 change in the Constitutional framework that it must come
20 through a Constitutional amendment properly passed under
21 the procedures set forth in Article V."

22 Now, I'm not going to bore you with the stats on
23 Article V. The process, you already know that. It's
24 either two-thirds of both houses of Congress or upon any
25 application of two-thirds of the state legislatures. We

1 don't have a lot of faith that Congress is going to limit
2 their own terms. We do have a lot of support currently in
3 Congress. Over 90 current members of Congress have signed
4 on and co-sponsored term limits amendments that we have
5 introduced. However, to get to two-thirds is simply --
6 it's not attainable at this point.

7 And that's where you come in. It's only by
8 pressure from the state legislatures that we'll actually
9 see this reality. And in fact, I would like to refer to
10 one of your own. And in my research on Article V, the
11 first person that I found that ever suggested an Article V
12 convention for a Congressional term limit was a gentleman
13 by the name of Tench Coxe from Philadelphia.

14 July 1788 is when he made the suggestion. This
15 was one month after the Constitution was ratified. And I
16 just want to read a quick sentence. Quote, he said, you
17 have been told also that after the new Constitution takes
18 place the officers under it may become perpetual. Now, it
19 is fully and absolutely secure that no representative,
20 senator, president, or vice-president can continue beyond a
21 stipulated time. And if the people think that time too
22 long, they can get their state legislatures to apply for
23 its being shortened. If nine legislatures out of 13 apply
24 this year or 10 years hence, there must be a convention
25 called to consider the point.

1 That was over 200 years ago. And this issue has
2 not gone away. Many of the framers supported term limits
3 back then. They called it rotation of office. And in
4 fact, Pennsylvania's first constitution had term limits in
5 it. So did our Articles of Confederation. Seven of the
6 states had rotation of office in them.

7 So this is a foundational principal of our
8 nation. It's not a new idea. And I'm not going to spend a
9 lot of time in regards to why we need them. I just want to
10 briefly remind us that the approval ratings of Congress
11 have consistently been very low. Fifteen to twenty percent
12 for decades. Yet, the re-election rate has been over 96
13 percent. That is because the incumbents have such an
14 advantage over any challengers.

15 The failure of Congress to address critical
16 issues in our country -- the debt, immigration, healthcare.
17 They continue to kick the can down the road on these
18 issues. We find them listening to their funders more than
19 their constituents. And this is a study that came out in
20 Princeton. Eighty percent of the American people could
21 want something. It doesn't matter. It has to be if the
22 funders want it, then we'll see it come to reality.

23 And lastly, members of Congress, there was a
24 expose by 60 Minutes. Thirty to seventy percent of time
25 spent in Congress is not doing the work of the American

1 people. It's raising money for the re-election and for the
2 parties. This is the dysfunction we're experiencing as a
3 nation. So in closing, I just want to share that we can't
4 do this at the ballot box. We can't change human nature.
5 We have to change the very structure so that we can allow
6 more people to participate in our government.

7 We, the voters, would have more choices at the
8 ballot box because we'd have people with a variety -- vast
9 different backgrounds and experience running for election.
10 Right now, a lot of good people don't bother to run because
11 they just cannot simply raise millions of dollars to go
12 against incumbents (indiscernible). And that's where term
13 limits really will be a benefit and reform to the American
14 people.

15 In closing, I would like to refer to current
16 gentlemen from Pennsylvania, Senator Patrick Toomey and
17 Governor Ed Rendell. This was an op-ed in the Philadelphia
18 Inquirer supporting this actual resolution. I'd just like
19 to share a quote from the op-ed. Our system will not be
20 fixed by those who broke it. Without enormous pressure,
21 members of Congress will never vote to limit their own
22 power and influence.

23 With that in mind, we call on the Pennsylvania
24 General Assembly to get the ball rolling by passing a
25 resolution applying for a congressional term limits

1 convention. We leave you with the words of a great
2 Pennsylvanian and fellow support of term limits, Benjamin
3 Franklin. Quote, in free governments, the rulers are the
4 servants and the people their superiors. For the former to
5 return among the ladder does not degrade but promote them,
6 unquote.

7 We could not agree more. Let's work on something
8 our country is united behind and increase faith in
9 government. Let's place term limits on Congress, unquote.
10 So I want to thank you for your time and your consideration
11 on HR 57, which is the actual resolution before you for
12 this effort. Thank you.

13 MR. RILEY: Good morning, everyone. My name is
14 Mike Riley. I live in Lebanon, Pennsylvania. I guess I
15 vote in the 101st district, not the 102nd district. I have
16 two roles here today. One, I am the Legislative Advocate
17 for Term Limits here in Pennsylvania. It's a volunteer
18 position. This is not what I get paid to do. I have
19 another job. So I'm limited by the amount of effort and
20 time that I can -- to support to this -- obviously, because
21 I have to feed my family, too, but you know, I do
22 appreciate the opportunity to be here today.

23 I've met with a lot of you and have had this
24 conversation with many of you, so I appreciate you all
25 having the opportunity to testify and finally get this

1 Article V process moving forward here in Pennsylvania. The
2 other thing that I do is I'm also on the local team doing
3 the grassroots effort. And in my testimony, you will see
4 that we have about 25,000 people that we have gotten
5 support from in the local population.

6 Several of those grassroots efforts -- it's
7 interesting. There's a very simple question that I ask
8 people when we're in these public forums. Are you happy
9 with how Congress is performing today? And they'll be
10 walking by the table, and they will take hard right and
11 come right over to the table and go, what? What are you
12 guys doing? How are we going to fix this? Because people
13 are fed-up, as Kenn has said.

14 And it's a very simple question. I don't ask
15 them, you know, what are your political beliefs? Are you a
16 Republican? Are you a liberal? Are you a Conservative,
17 Progressive? That never gets brought up. The only thing
18 they care about is fixing the performance of the U.S.
19 Congress today.

20 And so you see that we have 25,000 supporters in
21 Pennsylvania. I will tell you that we've generated that
22 25,000 signatures with less than 20 people. It's us just
23 going to some of these big shows and having the table.
24 Sitting there on our time off, non-paid, weekend, and
25 having a conversation. And people will come up and sign

1 the petition without asking a whole lot of questions. They
2 want to see change, and that is why I'm excited about this
3 opportunity to testify in front of you. I think that's the
4 biggest thing.

5 And those meetings, those conversations have
6 happened in Philadelphia. They've happened locally.
7 They've happened in Saylorsburg, and they've happened in
8 Washington County. So it's across the entire swath of the
9 Commonwealth that we are seeing this. It's not like a
10 representation from just here in Lebanon County. It's from
11 all over the state. So that's about all I wanted to say.
12 I think that that's the big point that I want to make.
13 Obviously, Ken is the guru when it comes to Article V. I'm
14 kind of representing the local constituents and answering
15 questions. Thank you for your time and the opportunity to
16 be here.

17 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN MACKENZIE: Great. Well, thank
18 you, gentleman, for your testimony. I'll start off with a
19 couple questions, and then we'll go to any other members
20 that have additional questions. So first, there are
21 about -- I think it's 15 or so states that have term limits
22 in their state legislatures. And can you tell me how
23 that's impacted their legislatures? Has satisfaction
24 increased there? Are they working better? What can we
25 learn from those states that have done this already?

1 MR. QUINN: In Maine, we do have term limits.
2 It's actually a rotational basis where they have to be out
3 of a chamber after four years, and they can go to the
4 Senate. There's a study being done that shows that term
5 limits actually do have a positive effect on spending at
6 the state level. So the budgetary process is less the term
7 limits in states. I'll give you an example, as well. The
8 Mercatus Center did a five-year study. It was published in
9 2018 ranking the states fiscally. Four out of the top five
10 states that were most fiscally solvent had term limits on
11 their state legislatures. None of the bottom had term
12 limits.

13 And so oftentimes I'll hear term limits getting
14 blamed for a lot of problems at the state level, but
15 there's just really no support for that. We have robust
16 elections in Maine. And you mentioned the 15 states. It
17 used to be 23. A few of those did overturn the term limits
18 laws and remove those.

19 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN MACKENZIE: And I will note
20 that we are being joined virtually now by Representative
21 Diamond. My next question -- and then we'll move on to
22 others -- is, you know, there are a lot of ways that people
23 propose to fix Congress, term limits being one of them. Do
24 you have thoughts on any of the other proposals or why term
25 limits are better? And so, for instance, people have

1 suggested increasing the size of the House of
2 Representatives, increasing the length of terms to reduce
3 the amount of fundraising. So there are other ideas
4 floating down there or out there. Why is term limits the
5 preferable option?

6 MR. QUINN: Moving down a rabbit hole, but you
7 mentioned the size of Congress. Actually, one of the Bill
8 of Rights amendments that was proposed by James Madison, if
9 it was to be ratified today would increase the size of
10 Congress to 6,000 members, and it's still active. It's
11 still possible. That's neither here nor there.

12 Yes, reform at the federal level, the reason why
13 I believe this is the best reform at this possible time is
14 because it's realistic. It's something that meets the
15 requirements of having a successful amendment. It's
16 supported by the American people. It's reform that helps
17 to return us to founding principles. And it's also an
18 amendment that is easy to understand. We've done this
19 before with the 22nd Amendment. We have it at state
20 legislatures. We have term limits at municipalities,
21 school boards, and you know, across the board in even
22 Fortune 500 companies.

23 So the understanding of the issue is easy for
24 people. It's not a policy-driven issue. It's not a right
25 or left issue. It's something that is pretty standard

1 across the board. And so there are many reforms. I could
2 spend the day talking about reforms. But in order to get
3 an Article V convention called, it requires a consensus
4 from two-thirds of the state legislatures. And once you
5 start adding too many issues to that, we'll just never get
6 to a convention. So this is a very limited subject matter,
7 single subject, non-partisan, highly supported.

8 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN MACKENZIE: All right. Well,
9 thank you, gentleman. Next up, I'll go to Chairman
10 Kenyatta.

11 MINORITY CHAIRMAN KENYATTA: Thank you. And
12 thank you for your testimony. You know, just simply what
13 length of terms are you suggesting for each chamber?

14 MR. QUINN: We're not. And that's the beauty of
15 this application. We just want to have the discussion. We
16 want the state legislatures to have this discussion on
17 behalf of the American people and let them hash it out,
18 debate it at the convention. So in our application, HR 57,
19 we are not advocating number of terms. We just want the
20 discussion had.

21 So we feel best that if we narrowed it down to
22 something too specific, it would not be successful. So
23 that will be up to you as state legislators and the
24 commissioners that you send. You can have that
25 conversation in the back rooms with your commissioners and

1 what you'd like for them to support.

2 MINORITY CHAIRMAN KENYATTA: Do you have an
3 opinion, just not obviously --

4 MR. QUINN: Personal opinion?

5 MINORITY CHAIRMAN KENYATTA: Yeah, personal
6 opinion.

7 MR. QUINN: Yes. And this is the most popular
8 form of term limits. Two terms for a member of the U.S.
9 Senate. So that'd be a total of 12 years served. And
10 three terms for a member of the House. So one individual
11 could serve in Congress for a total of 18 years. That's
12 fairly reasonable. And so that seems to be the most
13 popular form.

14 Obviously, right now, the term for a House member
15 is two years. A Senator, six. So you want to have -- the
16 House is to be more of a robust, active body, whereas the
17 Senate a little bit more mature and you know, slow to act.
18 And so that would kind of keep that same check and balance
19 between the two.

20 MINORITY CHAIRMAN KENYATTA: Thanks. I would say
21 sometimes they're too slow to act, but all right.

22 MR. QUINN: Yeah, true.

23 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN MACKENZIE: All right. Thank
24 you. Next, we'll go to Representative Madden.

25 REPRESENTATIVE MADDEN: Thank you, gentlemen.

1 Thank you for your testimony, and thank you for your
2 endeavor to make our government more fair and equitable. I
3 have a different approach. I would argue that term limits
4 are enshrined in every American citizen's Constitutional
5 right to get out and exercise their civic duty to vote. My
6 problem lies in campaign finance. It's ridiculous how much
7 money it takes to win a seat on the federal level, on the
8 state level.

9 I think when the Supreme Court said that
10 corporations were citizens, we really dove into the abyss
11 at that point, and I don't know how we get back. You know,
12 and personally, I think my congressman, my five-term
13 congressman is doing a spectacular job. Every year he is
14 productive. He gets bills passed through, you know, two
15 presidents now. And I don't want to replace him any time
16 soon.

17 But the fact that there's so much money in
18 campaigns doesn't allow the grassroots organizer, the
19 person who really has a new message, who has the potential
20 to win a race, to even compete because there's so much
21 money. And I think term limits is an easy fix. I think
22 the really hard work is campaign finance. And I think we
23 really need to work on that.

24 I would also say that I agree with term limits
25 for the President of the United States. And if I would

1 explore term limits for any other body, it would be the
2 Supreme Court. The idea that a president nominates and we
3 nominate a Supreme Court Justice who could be on that bench
4 for 20, 30 years, it's not fair. It's not equitable.

5 And as we see right now with the cases before the
6 Supreme Court, it could be incredibly detrimental to things
7 that we thought were, you know, precedent for 40, 50 years.
8 So I thank you for your testimony, and I welcome any
9 comments you have. Thank you.

10 MR. QUINN: Thank you. Great point. And I do
11 agree there's a problem with campaign money being spent.
12 And term limits actually is campaign finance reform.
13 Ninety-seven percent of corporate pact money goes to the
14 incumbents. And what term limits will do is greatly reduce
15 that money being spent on the incumbents because they're
16 not going to give money to challengers.

17 And so we will see a great reduction. It won't
18 go away completely. There's no magic wand to fix all of
19 our problems. But term limits not only is a form of
20 campaign finance; it's also a form of fiscal
21 responsibility, as well. I do hear that, you know, we have
22 elections, and it's common. You know, we like our Congress
23 person, but not the other people.

24 And so that's where we're stuck, because in order
25 to get the whole body fixed, we do have to maybe live with

1 the inconvenience of not having our favorite person in
2 Congress so that the entire country could benefit more by a
3 reform that really has been wanting -- the American people
4 have been wanting for decades.

5 Thomas Jefferson, he wrote to James Madison after
6 he read the Constitution. He said there's two things --
7 you know, here's the things I like about it. This is two
8 thing I hate about it. He did not include a bill of
9 rights. He was really disappointed that the framers did
10 not include that. He also said you took out rotation of
11 office. He said as long as the president and senators can
12 run for re-election, they will be officers for life because
13 the people will not vote them out, and he was accurate.

14 We need to fix the structure itself, and this is
15 the only way we can get that done is with a consistent
16 change of individuals. They can still serve. In fact, the
17 framers, most of them, they didn't hold a seat for too
18 long. They served at the government and the federal level,
19 at the state government. They were ambassadors.

20 We're just saying that one seat cannot be held
21 for 30, 40, 50 years. They can serve the rest of their
22 life throughout all levels of government and help in other
23 ways. And so that's what this reform will bring to us.

24 Thank you.

25 MR. RILEY: I appreciate what you're saying, and

1 I absolutely agree. The problem is, is I remember when I
2 was in Little Rock, Arkansas in 2009. NPR reported that
3 the U.S. Congress had a 20 percent approval rating at that
4 point. It's not gotten any better. So my question is --
5 and this is a simple way of just kind of looking at this --
6 if you went by a five-star rating of Congress, they have
7 one star. Would you be willing to eat at a restaurant that
8 had a one-star rating or stay in a hotel that has a one-
9 star rating?

10 And that's only a temporary solution, right?
11 Congress has permanent effects on all of our lives, and the
12 fact that they are getting away with having a 20 percent
13 approval rating and continue to have the same people over
14 and over serving is very much the problem from a campaign
15 finance reform -- you're right. The money is the problem,
16 and that's what's breaking the system.

17 But at the same time, and a more common way of
18 looking at things is how people look at things. They're
19 just not happy with it. And I agree, there are people in
20 Congress that are doing a great job. I just don't think
21 that there are enough of them that are actually making a
22 difference in our lives on a day-to-day basis.

23 REPRESENTATIVE MADDEN: (Indiscernible - away
24 from microphone). Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

25 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN MACKENZIE: All right. Thank

1 you. Next up, we have Representative Solomon.

2 REPRESENTATIVE SOLOMON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
3 Thank you so much for testifying. I wonder if you guys
4 could squarely deal with those that are opposed. It seems
5 to come in two forms. One is incumbents have specific
6 expertise that separates them from the newly elected
7 representative. And that's gained over many years in
8 service.

9 And number two -- and I think, Kenn, you brought
10 this up -- that there was a decision made that there are
11 very few restrictions on serving in office, right? So it's
12 just age, citizenship requirement. But basically, what
13 we've decided is the people decide the rest. Why is that
14 not the right approach? So incumbency and the people's
15 right to choose their elective representatives.

16 MR. QUINN: Thank you for the questions. When it
17 comes to institutional knowledge, I would like to just kind
18 of look at that currently. In Congress as of right now, we
19 have 8,000 years of institutional knowledge. Let me share
20 how I arrive at that number. The average tenure of a state
21 legislator is 10 years. Fifty percent of the members of
22 Congress were formerly state legislators. The average
23 tenure of a member of Congress is 10 years.

24 When you add up the service and the institutional
25 knowledge of their state level with their federal level, we

1 have 8,000 years currently sitting in Congress right now.

2 What is that getting us? That tends to be -- I
3 don't want to badmouth members of Congress, but just
4 because they have knowledge doesn't make it always good.
5 And what we really need is real life experience. They're
6 so detached from the normal American citizen. They spend
7 most of their time in D.C. with the lobbyists, the special
8 interest groups. They become detached on what it's like to
9 live under the laws that they're passing.

10 And so when it comes to that institutional
11 knowledge, what I would say, term limits would eliminate --
12 we're not going to -- term limits will not destroy
13 institutional knowledge. It's not like every year there's
14 going to be a whole new set of individuals. There's still
15 going to be overlap over terms. And so it's going to allow
16 people with real life experience -- many people have better
17 experience than what we have in D.C.

18 And one person does not have a monopoly on
19 experience on certain topics. We have over what? How many
20 millions of people in this country? Many can serve that.
21 So that would be my answer to the institutional knowledge
22 aspect. When it comes to the people, I think you said that
23 the people can change through elections. Well, the people
24 have done that. They've elected to put term limits on
25 Congress, and kind of that's their choice.

1 And so if we're going to believe in democracy, if
2 we're going to believe in the will of the people and what
3 they want, then this is overdue by decades because they
4 have voted over and over, and they continue to vote for
5 term limits when it's on the ballot for them.

6 So if we believe in a free democracy, then that
7 is true democracy, letting the people have their choice by
8 the representatives fulfilling their wishes on something
9 that is important. It's not a whimsical idea. It's
10 something that is foundational. And it will help introduce
11 other reforms. And like I said, it's not a magic wand, but
12 there are many good benefits to getting new eyes on
13 problems that just simply are not being addressed.

14 And so I agree, there's other issues, but we've
15 got to start somewhere. And the key to this one particular
16 one is this, if the states can call a convention for this
17 one amendment and show to the American people and to
18 yourselves that you have the power and the authority to fix
19 issues at the federal level, then we can introduce these
20 other great reforms because now the fear of this whole
21 process is alleviated. You'll see and realize the power
22 that you have as state legislatures to address what's not
23 being fixed at the federal level.

24 And so these other ideas of reforms that you've
25 mentioned can then be advanced the same way. So we just

1 need to get to a convention to prove the process works.
2 That answer your question?

3 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN MACKENZIE: All right. Well,
4 thank you. Gentlemen, based on the conversation that we've
5 had thus far, I do just have a couple other questions. So
6 the topic of the Article V convention has come up, and one
7 of the concerns that we hear when we discuss that topic is
8 a runaway convention. Can you address that issue or that
9 concern?

10 MR. QUINN: Yeah, I would like to address that.
11 Let me give you a little background. I used to believe
12 that. I was on the other side of the Article V issue. I
13 was believing information coming from an organization that
14 would use this idea of a runaway. I'll give you the
15 historical context of that. This is a myth that was
16 created to prevent some good reforms from being introduced.
17 Let me share with you and where it comes from.

18 The opponents of an Article V convention claim
19 that Congress called this Philadelphia Convention of 1787.
20 They called it to solely revise the Articles of
21 Confederation. And what happened? They showed up in
22 Philadelphia, and after a couple of weeks, the delegates
23 threw out the Articles and rewrote the whole document.
24 That's simply not true.

25 The Philadelphia Convention was not called by

1 Congress. It was called by the State of Virginia based
2 upon the recommendation that came from the Annapolis
3 Convention the previous year. That Convention recommended
4 that a convention be held in Philadelphia in May 1787 to --
5 in fact, I included in my packet to take -- you know what?
6 Yeah. No, it was actually to devise whatever means
7 necessary to render the federal Constitution adequate to
8 the exigencies of the Union. That was the call of that
9 convention. It wasn't to revise the articles.

10 And so the states sent their delegates. Each
11 state legislature provided a commission stating that
12 language in the commission. And so when those delegates
13 arrived, they had full authority to do what they did on
14 that day. So this idea of a runaway is based on a strawman
15 argument that is not based on the facts of our history.
16 That's the historical aspect.

17 Let me give you realistic reality here. The
18 states participate in a convention of states every single
19 year. It's called the Uniform Law Commission. It operates
20 exactly as an Article V convention. And I will give you
21 the documentation. So you appoint the commissioners. It's
22 a limited convention. They meet once a week, and they
23 draft model X. In fact, you are looking at several -- I
24 think three this year in the legislature -- that came from
25 an official convention of the states.

1 The only difference, when they vote -- I was at
2 this one this year. It was held in Madison, Wisconsin.
3 It's one state, one vote. That's how it's passed. Any act
4 that is passed by the states at this convention, they bring
5 it back to you, the Legislature to be adopted as state law.

6 So the only difference between the Uniform Law
7 Commission and an Article V convention is that instead of
8 proposing amendments to the Constitution, they're proposing
9 uniform state laws. And so you're actually using this
10 process every single year. And I'll provide you the
11 information on that, how you appoint them and which bills
12 you're actually looking at this year that came from it.

13 So that's the reality. And the idea of this
14 runaway is based on fantasy and fear because you're already
15 doing it. The only difference is instead of a uniform law,
16 let's introduce a term limit amendment. That's the only
17 difference. So thank you.

18 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN MACKENZIE: All right. And the
19 final question I have -- this came from the conversation
20 that was occurring before about your personal preference
21 for the amount of terms for members of Congress. And you
22 had stated two six-year terms for the Senate and three two-
23 year terms for the House. Is that correct?

24 MR. QUINN: Correct.

25 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN MACKENZIE: And so just I'm

1 wondering why -- I mean, the House has shorter term
2 lengths, but why also the shorter amount of time? Why six
3 years for House members versus twelve for the Senate? Does
4 that create an unfair balance?

5 MR. QUINN: Well, I believe the intent on that is
6 because the house should be more closer to the people and
7 more refreshed on regular basis, whereas the Senate is more
8 of a contemplative body, and more -- that's why they're
9 older, too. I think you have to be 35 to be a Senator, 25
10 to be a Congressman.

11 And so to have one representative in a House
12 district there for 12 years just seems to kind of off
13 balance how robust and close to the people it should be.
14 I'll give you one main reason is that right now the age
15 difference between members of Congress is close to 30 years
16 between the median average age of a person in their
17 district. And so there's such a discrepancy between the
18 age of members of Congress and their constituents. I think
19 this would allow younger people to be participating in
20 those districts.

21 I'm not married to specifically that out of the
22 convention, but that tends to be the reasoning behind why
23 we would have less time in the House more time in the
24 Senate just so that we can cycle through more people in
25 that district to kind of keep it little bit close to the

1 will of the people.

2 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN MACKENZIE: Great. Well, thank
3 you. And just for the members watching at home, just to
4 clarify, that is a separate proposal. That's what's being
5 proposed in Congress. And if they would be able to take
6 that up, that's the proposal there. Again, the Article V
7 Term Limits legislation does not have prescribed amounts of
8 time. Again, it would go to the convention and allow those
9 delegates at the convention to make that decision.

10 So I do want to thank you again, and I believe
11 that's all the questions that we have today. So I want to
12 thank all of the Members for joining us, and thank you as
13 testifiers for joining us, as well. Again, the resolution
14 that I've introduced is House Resolution 57, which would
15 create an Article V term limit process here in Pennsylvania
16 so that we can participate. And I would ask members that
17 are interested to please sign on to that and join us, and
18 again, thank you for joining us, and everyone have a great
19 day. Thank you. This meeting is adjourned.

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C E R T I F I C A T E

I hereby certify that the foregoing proceedings are a true and accurate transcription produced from audio on the said proceedings and that this is a correct transcript of the same.

JOANNA SARGENT
Transcriptionist
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