

# Issue 4

## PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT

**4** To Amend Article III, Section 2 of the Ohio Constitution by the addition of the following paragraphs:

No person shall hold any one of the offices of lieutenant governor, secretary of state, treasurer of state, attorney general, or auditor of state for a period longer than two successive terms of four years. Terms shall be considered successive unless separated by a period of four or more years. Only terms beginning on or after January 1, 1995 shall be considered in determining an individual's eligibility to hold the office of lieutenant governor, secretary of state, treasurer of state, attorney general, or auditor of state.

In determining the eligibility of an individual to hold an office in accordance with this article, (A) time spent in an office in fulfillment of a term to which another person was first elected shall not be considered provided that a period of at least four years passed between the time, if any, in which the individual previously held that office, and the time the individual is elected or appointed to fulfill the unexpired term; and (B) a person who is elected to an office in a regularly scheduled general election and resigns prior to the completion of the term for which he or she was elected, shall be considered to have served the full term in that office.

If adopted by a majority of electors voting on this amendment, each provision of this amendment shall be deemed severable from the others, and a finding that a provision is invalid shall not affect the other provisions.

A majority yes vote is necessary for passage.

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|  | Yes | SHALL THE PROPOSED AMENDMENT BE ADOPTED? |
|  | No  |  |

## EXPLANATION AND ARGUMENT FOR THE PROPOSED AMENDMENT

Issue 4 will limit the balance of Ohio's executive branch to the same limits that are placed upon the Governor. Since 1951 the term of the President has been limited. Since 1954 Ohio's Governor has served under a limit of two consecutive four-year terms.

The offices to be included are: Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of State, Treasurer, Attorney General, and Auditor. None of the current incumbents will be immediately thrown out of office due to the passage of this amendment. The terms to be limited begin with this election.

After reaching a limited term, incumbents holding these offices may run for any other office. They may also return to a previously held limited office after sitting out for a four year "rest period." This provision secures the voters' right to choose to return a previous incumbent, but prohibits an incumbent from making a career out of holding the same political office perpetually.

The above term limits issues have all been forwarded by a citizen-based initiative designed to bring elected officeholders closer in touch with the electorate they serve. None of these measures is designed to prohibit voter choice, nor diminish the power of regular elections. They are designed to create more balanced elections which will enable more Ohioans to serve in public office.

Committee For the Amendment

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## ARGUMENT AGAINST THE PROPOSED AMENDMENT

Executive officeholders don't make laws. They implement the laws made by the legislature. Mandatory turnover every eight years will not guarantee more efficient or effective performance. In fact, it will lessen the effectiveness of the offices by having new officeholders spend years mastering these complex jobs. This is time that could be used to better serve Ohioans.

The concept of Term Limits is not a good idea. It will not achieve more competitive elections or better public policy.

- Term Limits will not guarantee more competitive elections; elections will become even less competitive.
- Term Limits will not change the factors that make for cumbersome, disjointed public policy, because they don't change the fact that politicians do not receive clear, unambiguous instructions from the public about what the public's priorities are and what they are willing to pay to achieve these priorities.
- Term Limits will not lead to more informed and active citizen participation in government. By adopting Term Limits, we are giving in to the idea that citizens can't be trusted to make responsible choices and vote against the politicians they are no longer satisfied with, and we are giving up our power to make politicians accountable.
- Term Limits will guarantee that the system is shaken up, not just now, but constantly and permanently. With this constant turmoil, government will not work any more effectively or efficiently. Complex issues like health care and education finance reform take many years to adequately address. Short-term officeholders will tend to adopt short-term solutions to long-term problems.

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