Term Limits Essay, Research Paper

Presidential Term Limits

For as long as democracy has existed, term limits have existed. Both Cicero, the famous Roman statesman, and Aristotle, the renowned Greek philosopher, felt term limits were an essential part of any republic?s constitution. This was mainly due to their fear of monopolization of power by a single person. It may have been a justifiable fear in the ancient political world, but in modern America, it is irrational. Because of the multiple parties and interest groups in our government, and the power of legislative bodies, such as Congress and Senate, no individual could gain absolute rule. There should be term limits, but not ones that guard so heavily against such impossibilities and create unnecessary political drama. The practical six-year term limit should be implemented in the new millennium, and the dual four-year term limit must be re-evaluated and dismissed.

The average length of a presidential campaign is one and a half to two years. This number has increased with the advent of the new millennium. If an incumbent plans to run for the presidency a second time, the last year of his presidency is almost certainly devoted to his second bid for the presidency. All monies are used to fund his campaign. The president travels the nation in an attempt to revive himself politically and personally in the eyes of the American people. In the meantime, no one is fulfilling the duties of the president in the White House and little to nothing is getting accomplished. As opposed to the so-called ?Honeymoon Period,? hardly anything truly gets done in the president?s last term, especially if he plans on running again.

Many would argue that in the event that America elected a president that proved to be a popular, exceptional leader during his or her six-year term, the inability to re-elect him or her would unjustly deprive American voters. Realistically speaking, the difference between an eight-year presidency and a six-year presidency is merely two years, about the same amount of time candidates devote to extensive campaigning. In essence, a president who serves for eight years in office truly serves for about six years of the eight. It can also be argued that if a president proves to be a poor leader for the nation, he or she would serve for two more years that he or she would have under the four-year term limit. If the president is making decisions that are harmful to the American public, impeachment or election out of office could solve it.

With the knowledge that he or she has been granted six years and only six years to run America the best way they can, one would be inclined to believe that the president would do just that. Rather than focus on the needs of American citizens for the purpose of getting re-elected, perhaps the president would possess a more genuine desire to govern and truly influence the nation. In one term of six years, a president could accomplish a great deal more in Congress than in a term of four years. None of a six-year term is disrupted by campaign mania, nor would as much money be poured into elections. The idea of possibly re-vamping whole administrations every four years is extremely constant and certainly does not encourage stability.

One six-year term for every elected president would be sufficient time for him or her to work with law-making bodies and put the job of the presidency into perspective. A president?s goal is to go down in American history as a good president. With one term to accomplish this and the inability to be re-elected, they?d be more motivated to do so. Ultimately, modifying presidential term limits to single six-year terms would allow for more effective presidencies.