



Proposed Constitutional Amendment to Establish Supreme Court Term Limits

Introduced By: Senators Peter Welch (D-Vt.); Joe Manchin (I-W.Va.)

Background:

In recent years, public confidence in the U.S. Supreme Court has eroded. Following the 2024 Supreme Court term, only [16%](#) of Americans had “a great deal of confidence” in the Court. That crisis of confidence undermines the Court’s ability to serve its vital function and has profound consequences for our constitutional and democratic system of government.

The [vast majority](#) of the country supports establishing term limits for Supreme Court Justices. [49 of the 50 states](#) have established judicial term restrictions for their highest courts. Instituting term limits is a sensible way to help restore confidence in the Supreme Court, eliminate political gamesmanship from the nomination process, and reinforce judicial independence.

Resolution:

The joint resolution proposes a constitutional amendment to establish non-renewable, 18-year terms for new Supreme Court Justices, with a new term beginning every two years. These terms would create an opportunity for every President to appoint two Justices to the Court.

Additionally, the amendment would not adjust the tenure of sitting Justices, but rather institute a transition period to maintain regular vacancies as current Justices retire. During that period, 18-year terms will begin every two years, regardless of when a current Justice leaves the bench. Once a current Justice retires, the newly appointed Justice would serve out the remainder of the next open 18-year term. The amendment would not change the overall number of Justices on the Court.

Supporters:

The Supreme Court Term Limits Constitutional Amendment is supported by former federal judges and scholars across the legal spectrum, including: Diane P. Wood, retired U.S. Circuit Judge, U.S. Court of Appeals, Seventh Circuit; and Kermit Roosevelt, David Berger Professor, Administration of Justice, University of Pennsylvania Carey Law School.