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Date: Fri, 01 Mar 2002 16:20:27 -0500  
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Term Limits Not Needed=20  
According to Randall Gnant, President of the Arizona Senate, applying term=20  
limits in Arizona was not necessary since almost a third of all legislative seats=20  
turned over every two years. He believes term limits have led to a decline in=20  
civility in the legislative process, a decline in institutional memory and an=20  
erosion of representative government, increased power to the unelected bureaucracy=20  
and the rise of free agency among members. =20  
He further states that while there has always been substantial turnover=20  
in members and leadership every two years in Arizona, Arizona still had several=20  
members who, prior to term limits, had spent lengthy careers in public service.=20  
Gnant feels that while cynics would say that such long-term service by a handful=20  
of members is harmful, the exact opposite is true. Such service helps provide=20  
institutional memory and knowledge that is valuable in the legislative process.=20  
For example, like many states, Arizona is experiencing its first economic slowdown=20  
since the early 1990s. According to Gnant, there are only eight Senators who=20  
have been through similar economic times and have experience in balancing a budget=20  
with slowing revenues. There is not a single member of the Arizona House of=20

Representatives that has voted on a budget that does not foresee increasing revenues=20  
and large budget surpluses.=20

The full article, "Term Limits Not Necessary," appears in the Fall 2001 issue=20  
of=20  
Spectrum: The Journal of State Government.

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### Consequences of Term Limits=20

Shane Broadway, Arkansas' Speaker of the House, states that term limit laws=20  
in Arkansas have been neither the panacea proclaimed by supporters, nor have=20  
they wrought the destruction predicted by naysayers. Term limits have opened=20  
the door for younger, fresher faces with, hopefully, some new ideas.

Broadway reflects on the consequences of implementing term limits in Arkansas.=20

A foreseen consequence of term limits has been House members seeking Senate seats=20  
as they are vacated, and term-limited constitutional officers running for another=20  
constitutional office.

An unforeseen effect of term limits has been felt in redistricting plans=20  
this year, as the state Board of Apportionment attempts to redraw district lines=20  
based on the 2000 Census. The process has opened new districts and created vacant=20  
seats where none before existed. It also has led to House members, knowing their=20  
time is limited in the House, to protect or influence the boundaries of their=20  
Senate seats for a possible future campaign. Current senators have been known=20  
to do the same for a future House race.=20

The full article, "Gradual Transformation Under Term Limits," appears in the=20  
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Challenges of Term Limits

While fresh blood invigorates the political system, Rick Johnson, Michigan Speaker of the House, feels term limits do have downsides. Just as some lawmakers are reaching their full potential, they must leave their posts because of term limits. This has led many in Michigan to question the value of term limits and the need to extend them.

Johnson recognizes the positive outcomes of term limits, however. He states, "Even under term limits, my colleagues are dedicated public servants. A legislator's work cannot be measured solely by the hours they vote on the floor. Responsible lawmakers sponsor local meetings, conduct district office hours and attend dozens of events in their area every week. Throughout the summer months, even though session had adjourned, my caucus convened hearings in every corner of Michigan on health care, land use, tax simplification and declining school enrollments. They answer constituent calls and work to solve problems throughout the year. The workload doesn't change under term limits, just the amount of time you have to finish it."

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In the past, the Democratic party generally controlled both chambers, and=20  
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Grassroots efforts to repeal or modify legislative term limits in Oklahoma=20  
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<b>CAPITOL Commitment</b>
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<p>California enacted term limit legislation in 1990, making it one of the nation's leaders on the issue. The state is taking a leading role again by taking proactive approach to dealing with the ripple effects of term limits.</p> <p>To assist freshman legislators in carrying out their new responsibilities, California created the California Assembly Program for Innovative Training and Orientation for the Legislature (CAPITOL) Institute, a comprehensive training program for new members, covering everything from writing legislation to ethics.</p> <p>According to Robert M. Hertzberg, California's Speaker of Assembly, lawmakers know their time to contribute is short approach their work with a sense of urgency seldom seen before limits were imposed. And in this fast-moving era of the New Economy, a government that can keep pace is needed.</p> <p>In short, Hertzberg believes term limits are neither the cure-all promised by its supporters nor the calamity feared by its critics. California's leaders, at least, have come to see them instead as a challenge to reshape our institutions and as an opportunity to revitalize our work on the public's behalf.</p> <p>The full article, "Term Limits and the CAPITOL Institute," appears in the Fall 2001 issue of <i>Spectrum: The Journal of State Government</i>.</p>
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