

<https://www.nhregister.com/opinion/article/Opinion-Impeachment-and-the-need-for-term-limits-14944968.php>

New Haven Register

<https://www.ctpost.com/opinion/article/Opinion-Impeachment-and-the-need-for-term-limits-14944968.php>

CONNECTICUT POST

<https://www.thehour.com/opinion/article/Opinion-Impeachment-and-the-need-for-term-limits-14944968.php>

The Hour

<https://www.stamfordadvocate.com/opinion/article/Opinion-Impeachment-and-the-need-for-term-limits-14944968.php>



<https://www.greenwichtime.com/opinion/article/Opinion-Impeachment-and-the-need-for-term-limits-14944968.php>



<https://www.newstimes.com/opinion/article/Opinion-Impeachment-and-the-need-for-term-limits-14944968.php>

newstimes.com

<https://www.middletonpress.com/opinion/article/Opinion-Impeachment-and-the-need-for-term-limits-14944968.php>

THE MIDDLETOWN PRESS

<https://www.registercitizen.com/opinion/article/Opinion-Impeachment-and-the-need-for-term-limits-14944968.php>

THE REGISTER CITIZEN

Opinion: Impeachment and the need for term limits

By Edward L. Marcus
January 3, 2020



Photo: Christian Abraham / Hearst Connecticut Media

Protester Denise Puffer, of Cape Cod, in center, takes part in a rally with over 200 other area residents to support the impeachment of President Trump along Old Post Road in Fairfield, Conn., on Tuesday Dec. 17, 2019.

The impeachment inquiry hearings highlighted America's desperate need for term limits.

Our nation's founders never intended for members of Congress to be permanent fixtures. Being a member of Congress was never intended to be a permanent job. Unfortunately, Congressional districts have been gerrymandered so that most Congressional districts are set so that, except for unusual situations, a single political party is slated to hold the district, essentially forever.

Some districts are configured, unintentionally, of course, to be contested but even there, the advantage of incumbency takes hold. The result is that we end up with individuals in Congress for 30, 40 years and more.

Watching the impeachment hearings was a clue as to the inability of many current members of Congress to function. A number of congressmen were given only 30 or 60 seconds to speak, most of them on the Republican side. They were absolutely unable to say their piece without reading it and were unable to get the words out without giving it a staged appearance. The appearance of many of the many members of Congress was unkempt and certainly did not lead to any feeling of confidence that these people were in the most part not just political hacks locked in to safe districts and are just worried about a primary. If they can avoid that, they are home free. This isn't the kind of Congress the Constitution envisioned.

What was hoped for was a citizen Congress where people would stay a few years and then leave so that new people and fresh ideas could enter Congress. Instead, control of Congress and seemingly a majority of its members are never going to do be employed at anything else, except, perhaps, becoming a lobbyist down the road — an easy way to enhance their investment portfolios.

In the Senate, having a six-year term gives the incumbent an incredible advantage both in money, and recognition. If you are like Connecticut's Sen. Richard Blumenthal, for example, you get on board for whatever is the issue of the day and always have your name before the public. It is a built-in advantage. But the concept of senators being there for six, seven, eight terms — until they either have dementia or are on the verge of death — is just not the way it was meant to be. Although I must admit that there have been some in that group, like a John McCain, who have been good for the country.

I believe that it would make sense to limit house members to six consecutive two-year terms. If they are able to stay out of office for two years and then come back, well, so be it. At least someone else has had a chance. For U.S. senators, two consecutive six-year terms would seem to be plenty.

How you get it done is the difficult part as it would require a Constitutional amendment and a Congress willing to put self-interests aside. No easy task.

The City Council and mayor in New York have term limits. The president of the United States has term limits. Why not Congress?

Some people have compared our current Congress to a pride of lions in the Serengeti. The male lions spend a significant amount of their waking hours patrolling and marking their territory by rubbing against trees, scratching the dirt and spraying urine. They also spend considerable time sniffing for the scent of an intruder or roaring to get the attention of other lion prides to warn them that they are getting too close. The balance of their time is spent forcing others of the pride away from a kill and gorging themselves. Not a nice description of the U.S. Congress, but unfortunately it does describe a substantial number of entrenched members.

Tom Steyer, who is running for president largely through television advertising, has been touting the need for term limits. While Steyer is not my first choice for the presidential nomination, I do support his call for term limits. It would be a really good for the country.

Edward L. Marcus is former chairman of the Democratic State Central Committee in Connecticut and former State Senate majority leader. His office is in Branford.