

SWING VOTE SAM EXPLAINS

The Promotion

SAM SAYS

"Going home isn't a demotion. It's a promotion."

Benjamin Franklin, 1787: in a free country, the rulers are the servants and the people are their superiors. So sending a servant home isn't a demotion. It's a promotion.

He meant the presidency. Presidents now get two terms. Members of Congress get as many as voters hand them, and in 2024, 97 percent of House incumbents who reached the general election won another.

87 percent of Americans favor term limits for Congress, across both parties. It has never passed. The people who would have to pass it are the people it sends home.

The facts

1. Franklin, July 26, 1787, as recorded by James Madison: "In free Governments the rulers are the servants, and the people their superiors & sovereigns." He was speaking in a debate about the president's term.[1]
2. The Twenty-second Amendment, ratified in 1951, limits a president to two elected terms. The Constitution sets no term limit for members of Congress, and states cannot add one on their own.[2,3]
3. 87 percent of Americans favor limiting the number of terms members of Congress can serve, including 90 percent of Republicans and Republican leaners and 86 percent of Democrats and Democratic leaners (Pew Research Center, 2023 survey).[4,5]
4. In 2024, 372 of the 383 House incumbents who made it to the general election won, about 97 percent.[6]

What you can do

1. Ask every candidate on your ballot, in person or by email, where they stand on term limits.
2. Vote in your primary too, not just in November.
3. Check your registration before your state's deadline. **vote.gov**
4. Show up.

Scan to watch Sam explain it
swingvotesam.com/issues/term-limits

Sources

1. Avalon Project, Yale Law School, "Madison's Notes of Debates in the Federal Convention, July 26, 1787". https://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/debates_726.asp
2. National Archives, "The Constitution: Amendments 11-27 (Twenty-second Amendment)". https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/amendments-11-27
3. Legal Information Institute, Cornell Law School, "U.S. Term Limits, Inc. v. Thornton, 514 U.S. 779 (1995)". https://www.law.cornell.edu/supremecourt/text/514/779
4. Pew Research Center, "How Americans view proposals to change the political system", September 19, 2023. https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2023/09/19/how-americans-view-proposals-to-change-the-political-system/
5. Pew Research Center, "Most Americans favor big changes to the political system that likely would require amending the Constitution (citing its 2023 survey)", July 28, 2026. https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2026/07/28/most-americans-favor-big-changes-to-the-political-system-that-likely-would-require-amending-the-constitution/
6. FairVote, "18 Months from Election Day 2026, 81% of House seats are already decided", April 28, 2025. https://fairvote.org/press/house-elections-broken-release-2025/

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