

HEADLINE NEWS

Proposal To Modify Michigan Term Limits Law May Make January '08 Election Ballot?

Proponents of altering a Michigan law that limits how long a politician can serve in the state Legislature may ask voters to revisit the issue in January 2008.

Specifically, voters, during the just-added January 15th presidential primary election, may also be presented a proposal to amend the state Constitution by reducing the total number of years an individual can serve in the Michigan Legislature to 12 from 14.

Under Michigan's current term-limitations law, which was passed in 1992, state lawmakers can serve 3 two-year terms – or 6 years – in the House of Representatives and 2 four-year terms – or 8 years – in the Senate, for a total of 14 years in the Legislature.

The proposed constitutional amendment would allow an individual to serve a total of 12 years – all in the House, all in the Senate or a combination in both chambers. It would also prescribe a transition period to allow current lawmakers to serve a total of 12 consecutive years in the chamber to which they are presently elected, regardless of previous service in the other chamber.

Proponents of the constitutional amendment contend it could actually afford fledgling lawmakers more time to learn the nuances of the legislative process and garner sorely needed on-the-job experience. That, they argue, will promote overall stability in state government in an era of persistent economic duress in Michigan.