**Compact for America Educational Foundation, Inc.**

**Initial Congressional Term Limits Amendment Draft**

**February, 2016**

**Amendment \_\_\_**

**Section 1.** No person shall be elected to the office of United States Senator more than twice, and no person who has held the office of Senator for more than four years of a term to which some other person was elected Senator shall be elected to the office of Senator more than once.

**Section 2.** No person shall be elected to the office of United States Representative more than four times.

**Section 3**. This Article shall become operative two years after ratification. But this Article shall not prevent any person who may be holding the office of Senator or Representative, or acting as Senator or Representative, during the term within which this Article becomes operative from holding the office of Senator or Representative or acting as Senator or Representative during the remainder of such term.

**Pros:**

1. Career membership in Congress will no longer be possible.
2. Open-seat Congressional elections with no incumbents will occur more frequently.
3. Each House will be subject to an open-seat election every 8 years and each Senate seat will be subject to an open seat election every 12 years..
4. If the amendment were to be ratified on July 4, 2018, it would go into effect on July 4, 2020, first impacting the November 2020 elections. The two year transition period will allow adequate time for those who will be term limited to prepare for the future, and adequate time for new candidates to prepare to run for office.
5. Amendment objectives cannot be gamed by the timed resignation of a sitting member of Congress
6. By avoiding a drafting convention and a separate ratification process, the use of the agreed-to, pre-drafted amendment could save 4-9 years in the amendment process, could save upwards of $100 million in convention costs, and would eliminate the ability of opponents of term limits to kill the amendment during ratification.
7. Amendment text is very reasonable. There is no guarantee that a drafting convention would propose a similar reasonable amendment, or improve the proposed amendment.
8. Wording is based on the 22nd Amendment which provides for Presidential term limits.
9. The Senate has a longer term limit because is intended to serve a different function from the House: in its advice and consent role in the appointment process and its ratification power in the treaty process, it is given a prime role in the formulation of American foreign policy. Stability of membership is intended to aid it in serving that function. Stability in membership in the Senate is thus served by the longer terms.
10. 8 years of service in the House would be good training ground for future Senators.

**Cons:**

1. It may be well expected that Senators would have close to 20 years in Congressional office – 8 years in the House and 12 years in the Senate.
2. Longest time in Congressional office possible under the amendment would be approximately 26 years in very remote circumstances (2 years appointment to House, 4 – 2 year re-elections to the House, 4 year appointment to Senate, and 2 – 6 year re-elections to Senate).