

THE COSTS OF REFORM

Consequences of Limiting Legislative Terms of Service

Neil Pinney, George Serra and Dalene Sprick

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research is to discern more explicitly how electoral reforms that limit terms of service impact on intra-party competition and campaign expenditures in US state legislative contests. Particularly, we are interested in whether term limits have differential effects across political parties, given the increasing number of open seats. Contrary to the conventional argument that term limits will invigorate competition, we find that increasing the number of candidates does not translate into more competitive races. In fact, the implementation of term limits results in a decrease in the level of electoral competition in open races, particularly for Democratic candidates. Moreover, this decrease in electoral competition is typically related to a dramatic increase in campaign expenditures in districts with open races.

KEY WORDS ■ competition ■ term limits ■ US states

Introduction

In a democracy, citizens are expected to be interested in politics and to participate in political affairs. Berelson et al. (1954) note that citizen interest and participation can take various forms, such as reading and listening to campaign materials, working for a candidate or a party, arguing politics, donating money and voting. Another important means of participation is the willingness of citizens to compete for public office. Electoral policy establishes the legitimacy and structure of competition in the electoral process. Consequently, changing the rules of elections can make it either more likely or less likely that particular groups or types of candidates will have a competitive advantage (Finer, 1975). The purpose of this research is

to discern more explicitly the impact of term limits on intra-party electoral competition and campaign expenditures in state legislative contests.

Carey (1996) states that almost all legislative theory is based on the assumption that legislators' primary motivation is re-election, and consequently he believes political science is 'ill-equipped' to provide insights about individuals who are severed from the electoral connection by such reforms (p. 3). Thus, faced with the progressively rooted movement to limit legislative terms in United States, he seeks to offer a comparative analysis of their likely impact by investigating Costa Rica and Venezuela. Carey's investigation focuses on how term limits impact on legislative careers, particularism¹ and party cohesiveness in terms of voting. We focus our research on an empirical investigation of claims that such a reform will enhance electoral competition and that citizen participation will be invigorated by removing entrenched interests through mandatory limits on length of legislative service. In particular, we are concerned with the predictions that such reforms are likely to advantage particular groups: more specifically, it has been argued that limiting terms of service will work to the disadvantage of Democratic candidates.

Fiorina (1996) predicted that term limits would disadvantage Democratic candidates by creating an environment where they are subjected to higher opportunity costs. His argument is that full-time non-limited legislative careers are more attractive to Democrats as these provide alternative career choices that are often more appealing than other options. Democrats are attracted to the prospect of full-time legislative service because they tend not to have the career flexibility and discretionary income that would allow them to take time away from their careers to serve on a part-time basis (see also Jewell and Patterson, 1986 and Keefe and Ogul, 1985). Conversely, Fiorina argues that Republicans are more attracted to part-time legislatures because full-time long-term service would usually require them to forgo much more attractive alternative careers in business and other professions.

Ehrenhalt (1991) and Carey et al. (1998) also assert that there are likely to be discrepancies in how the parties view reforms such as term limits, and that these differences might serve to benefit a particular party. In essence they argue that liberals (because of their ideological beliefs) find politics and government more appealing than do their conservative counterparts; thus liberals are more likely than conservatives to be drawn to and willing to serve in a long-term political career. The authors argue that conservatives might be more willing to serve if there was a guarantee of a limited time frame of service. Reforms such as term limits, which discourage careers in politics, therefore, make political service more attractive to conservatives who view government more negatively.

If these arguments are correct, then electoral reforms that limit terms of service might also alter the incentive structure for potential candidates, which could either advantage or disadvantage a particular party. With the

increasing numbers of legislatures being impacted,² the necessity of understanding the true consequences of the policy becomes more urgent than ever.

Term limits prohibit legislators from seeking re-election and thus remove the single greatest factor influencing potential candidates' decisions to run for office (Kazee, 1994). The implementation of term limits has a natural consequence of creating more open seats. Moreover, an open seat race is likely to be more competitive than an incumbent race. According to most studies of state legislative elections, incumbents tend to enjoy more than an 88 percent chance of being re-elected (Breau and Jewell, 1992; Garand, 1991; Jewell and Breau, 1988). Thus proponents of term limits argue that the mandatory prohibition of legislators from seeking re-election is likely to dramatically increase the competition in elections and provide voters with a more diverse and appealing selection of candidates (Barcellona and Grose, 1994; Fund, 1991; Petracca, 1991).

Central to the present investigation is competition, which, in turn, can affect the cost of running a campaign. Much of the literature accepts the notion that with increased competition election costs also increase (see Jacobson, 1997 and Caress, 1996 for further review). Greater competition resulting from an increased number of open seats means that campaign costs are likely to rise, especially in intra-party contests. Voters are divorced from the anchoring cue of party labels in contests of relative unknowns (Katz, 1994). This encourages image building and flashy campaigns and an insatiable need of resources.

Mitchell (1991) argues, however, that term limits decrease electoral competition and thus reduce campaign costs by altering the value of a legislative seat. If candidates are unable to take advantage of the enhanced likelihood of re-election that incumbency provides and make a career out of serving in public office, then the value of obtaining that office is decreased. Similarly, Fowler argues that political entrepreneurs need incentives to take electoral risks and that term limits eliminate the most fundamental incentives by telling candidates: "You can take all these risks, but there will be no payoff. You will not be in a position to capitalize on your investment" (1992: 182). Kermit and Lott (1997) provide mixed evidence for this perspective. They find that after term limits were adopted, and yet prior to their actual implementation in California, the level of competition in state legislative races increased while the cost of campaigns decreased.

Given the conflicting theories and evidence in the literature our goal is to discern more explicitly the effects term limits have on intra-party competition and campaign costs at the state district level. Studies utilizing aggregate level data to assess the impact of legislative term limits might miss the subtle changes that are occurring within districts. Hogan and Hamm (1998) find dramatic variations between districts within a single state in relation to competition, spending and cost per vote. They conclude that not all districts are created equal and any reforms should consider the characteristics of the legislative district. Therefore, to truly assess the impact term

limits have on competition and expenditures one should consider district level data.

Additionally, term limit advocates and proponents assert that term limits will alter the type of individuals that seek office (see Ehrenhalt (1991) and Kazee (1994) for discussion on strategic ambition). However, Carey et al. (2003) find no systematic changes in the demographic characteristics of those seeking office after term limits. Yet, they state that alterations in motivation are still likely and that 'it is plausible that changes [due to term limits] would show up in the nature of legislative campaigns and elections' (p. 19). In other words, by modifying the rules of the game, legislative term limits change the incentive structure candidates operate under and presumably the motivations and aspirations that will guide their office-seeking behavior.

We focus on intra-party primary contests because competition for state legislative seats begins there; candidates who choose to run for legislative office typically begin by contesting a party primary (see Carey et al., 2003: 113). The examination of intra-party contests captures all of the competition that occurs; if we simply examine contests between Republicans and Democrats in the general election, 'we would miss instances in which a [candidate] tried for the nomination and was defeated' (Carey et al., 2003: 113). Our unit of analysis allows us to examine multiple candidates for each party, rather than the censored sample a general election contest would provide.

Because the central element of this investigation is the nature of candidate competition, our investigation begins with an examination of this concept. Since there are a number of ways to assess competition (see Kermit and Lott, 1997; Holbrook and Van Dunk, 1993; Grau, 1981; Gray, 1976 for a review on measures and types), our study considers several of them in an effort to determine what, if any, changes are occurring. After assessing the effect term limits have on competition, we consider the impact that competition has on campaign expenditures.

Data and Methods

This study makes use of data from the 1994 and 1998 Republican Party and Democratic Party primary elections in Michigan and Ohio. All other factors held constant, if term limits change intra-party competition and campaign expenditures in state legislative races, we should be able to detect the impact of these effects by comparing candidates elected in a state that has implemented term limits and experienced mandatory retirement of state legislators (Michigan) with those elected in a state that has yet to implement term limits and as such has not forced retirement on state legislators (Ohio).

Michigan is a particularly good test case, since it experienced the largest mandatory removal of legislators from office of any state implementing term

limits. In 1996, only 52 members of state legislators nationwide were removed from office, while in Michigan 67 out of 110 House members were removed in 1998. Another feature that makes Michigan a particularly compelling test case is that while it is classified as a professional legislature, it does not suffer from the same degree of extremism associated with California (Thompson and Moncrief, 1998). Michigan represents a more typical professionalized legislature than California, and it is also more aligned with average expenditures in state races than California.³

Ohio is a particularly good comparable test case because it is similar to Michigan in its average campaign expenditures in state legislative races pre-term limits, and its legislature's partisan composition and level of professionalization.⁴ It also shares other similar characteristics with Michigan, such as geographical region and economic sectors. Furthermore, the 1994 and 1998 elections in Ohio and Michigan were gubernatorial races that had similarly popular Republican candidates running for election, winning by fairly comfortable margins.

We focus on non-presidential election years to control for external factors that might potentially confound results; thus we exclude the 1996 primary election results from the analyses. Voting trends in presidential elections affect overall voting outcomes of state legislative contests (Bibby, 1983; Campbell, 1988; Chubb, 1988; Holbrook-Provow, 1987). Furthermore, presidential elections are generally more visible to voters and they have higher voter turnout than off-year elections; each of these factors increases the probability that candidates running for state legislator will face greater opportunity costs (i.e., increased campaign expenditures) (Jacobson, 1997; see also Breaux and Gierzynski, 1991) for a discussion of the relationship between the ability of challengers to compete and the amount of money spent on their campaigns).

The Michigan and Ohio mid-term elections (1994 and 1996) therefore provide an appropriate quasi-experimental design to examine differences in competitiveness and expenditures within intra-party contests. We now turn our attention to a discussion of measures of primary electoral competition.

Measuring Competition

Despite the popular usage of the notion of competition, no thoughtful student of the subject of elections can be entirely satisfied with a single measure of electoral competition (Holbrook and Van Dunk, 1993). One potential measure of primary competition is the total numbers of candidates running (e.g., the more candidates running, the greater the competition). As Herrnson (1995) argues, open-seat primaries are the most competitive of all primaries. Unlike races that involve an incumbent, they typically attract multiple candidates and often pit highly qualified candidates against each other. Political amateurs might also be attracted to run in open primaries,

Table 1. Average number of candidates in district primary

	1994		1998	
	<i>Open race</i>	<i>Incumbent race</i>	<i>Open race</i>	<i>Incumbent race</i>
Michigan [F(7,429) = 6.94, $p < 0.01$]				
Republican	2.42 (N=19)	1.51 (N=90)	2.64 (N=64)	1.61 (N=46)
Democrats	1.89 (N=19)	1.54 (N=91)	2.47 (N=62)	1.46 (N=48)
Ohio [F(7,360) = 4.37, $p < 0.01$]				
Republican	1.53 (N=15)	1.14 (N=81)	1.62 (N=16)	1.16 (N=69)
Democrats	1.93 (N=15)	1.19 (N=78)	1.31 (N=16)	1.28 (N=78)

but are less likely to experience success than more qualified fellow partisans. The prediction is that more candidates will participate in open primary races than incumbent races, since they do not have to defeat an incumbent in order to win the nomination.

In the primary elections, there was an increase from 359 candidates seeking office for Michigan's House of Representatives in 1994 to 461 candidates in 1998. While this represents a 30 percent increase, the increase is more predominant among Republican candidates (182 in 1994 to 238 in 1998, or a 31 percent increase) than for Democratic candidates (177 in 1994 to 223 in 1998, or a 26 percent increase). Absent the implementation of term limits, in Ohio there were 241 candidates in 1994 and 234 in 1998, indicating only a marginal decline. However, the number of Democratic candidates remains stable at 124 in both 1994 and 1998, while the number of Republicans slightly decreases from 117 in 1994 to 110 in 1998.

To gain a more accurate estimate of differences occurring between the 1994 and 1998 primary races, we partition the total number of candidates seeking office by state, party (Republican versus Democrat) and by open primary races (those without an incumbent) versus those districts with an incumbent seeking re-election. The results of this analysis are displayed in Table 1.⁵ The logic behind creating these distinctions in the data is twofold. First, research indicates that open races tend to experience much greater levels of competition when compared with incumbent races. Second, the level of competition between Republican primaries and Democratic primaries is likely to be different as each party perceives different levels of potential success in winning a given district (Key, 1942, 1956; Morehouse, 1981; Jewell and Breaux, 1988).

The results indicate significant differences between the average number of candidates running in Michigan before and after term limits and between open and incumbent primary races. More specifically, there is a significant [F(1,429) = 12.32, $p < 0.01$] increase from 1994 ($\bar{x} = 1.63$) to 1998 ($\bar{x} = 2.11$) and a significant [F(1,429) = 44.18, $p < 0.01$] difference between incumbent ($\bar{x} = 1.53$) and open ($\bar{x} = 2.46$) races. The results indicate that the number

of candidates competing in open races increases for both parties after term limits, while the number of candidates remains relatively stable for both parties in incumbent races. In contrast, the average number of candidates per district is not significantly different between the parties.

While data from Ohio indicate overall significant differences in the average number of candidates, those differences are limited to open versus incumbent races [$F(1,368) = 20.18, p < 0.01$]. Other differences in the number of candidates across time periods and parties are not significant.

Comparing the average number of candidates in each district fails to reflect the competitive viability of candidates and between candidates. Thus, we extend our examination of competition by employing part of a formula used by Holbrook and Van Dunk (1993: 961) to calculate a competition index that can be compared across districts and time.⁶ Their research improves on previous controversial aggregated measures by devising a much more accurate indicator of electoral competition.⁷

Voting Competition

We assess electoral competition at the district level by creating a competition index score comprising two factors: the winning percentage of the popular vote in the party primary and the difference (i.e. margin) between the percentage of votes of the victor and the second-place candidate. These two factors are not redundant, especially given the likelihood that two or more candidates might be seeking the same office in a primary race. Owing to the potential for multiple candidates, there is a distinct possibility that the winning candidate might receive only a small percentage of the popular vote and yet have a significant margin of victory over the closest runner-up. Consequently, both components must be considered to accurately assess the level of competition that exists within a district race. To accomplish this we utilize the following formula:

$$\text{Voting Competition Index (VCI)} = 100 - [(\% \text{ vote of winner} + \% \text{ margin of victory})/2]$$

To examine the level of competition that occurred in the 1994 and 1998 primaries this formula is applied to all districts, both with incumbents running and those with open seats and for the Republican and Democratic primaries, respectively. The result is a rating or a score of competitiveness to measure intra-party competition (Republican and Democrat) for each primary election race for each year. Furthermore, the data are divided by open versus incumbent races. Each of the datasets is then aggregated and mean voting competition scores are compared for the different groups. Table 2 gives the average VCI scores for open and incumbent primary races in 1994 and 1998 based on state and party.

Table 2. Voting competition index

	1994		1998	
	Open race	Incumbent race	Open race	Incumbent race
Michigan [F(7,410) = 8.63, $p < 0.01$]				
Republican	42.23 (N=19)	13.27 (N=88)	39.96 (N=59)	17.19 (N=46)
Democrats	36.81 (N=18)	14.20 (N=87)	27.32 (N=57)	14.15 (N=44)
Ohio [F(7,342) = 5.66, $p < 0.01$]				
Republican	20.29 (N=15)	5.60 (N=78)	19.25 (N=15)	7.10 (N=64)
Democrats	17.68 (N=15)	6.45 (N=75)	5.42 (N=15)	9.70 (N=73)

The model for Michigan indicates significant differences in voting competition scores.⁸ These lie between the pre- and post-term limit time periods [F(1,410) = 7.61, $p < 0.01$] and between open and incumbent races [F(1,410) = 52.47, $p < 0.01$]. In addition, analysis of the data indicates that while the competition scores in Republican contests modestly decrease (5.4 percent) in open races between 1994 and 1998, the scores for Democrats drop more dramatically (25.8 percent), while competition scores in incumbent races remain relatively stable for both party primaries [F(5,410) = 10.07, $p < 0.01$]. The model for Ohio also indicates that there are significant differences in the voting competition scores; however, such differences are isolated to open and incumbent races [F(1,349) = 4.74, $p < 0.01$]. Party and year are not significant.⁹

Interestingly, while the average number of candidates increases after the implementation of term limits (Table 1), the level of competition in open races decreases. It is noteworthy that there are differential effects of term limits on competition scores across parties in the Michigan results; our findings suggest that the implementation of these reforms may indeed hurt Democrats more than Republicans in terms of intra-party competition.

Campaign Expenditures

Having looked at the impact of term limits on electoral competition in intra-party contests, we now examine the consequences of limiting legislative terms of service on campaign expenditures. A recurring question among scholars interested in this field is whether term limits demonstrably increase campaign costs. The evidence, however, that reform increases the costs of legislative campaigns is mixed (e.g. Caress, 1996; Jacobson, 1997; Kermit and Lott, 1997; Mitchell, 1991). Given the contradiction in the literature, it is important to discern more explicitly the effects of term limits on total primary expenditures. To see whether intra-party campaign expenditures increased post-term limits, we compile primary campaign expenditure data for each candidate within each district from the Michigan Bureau of

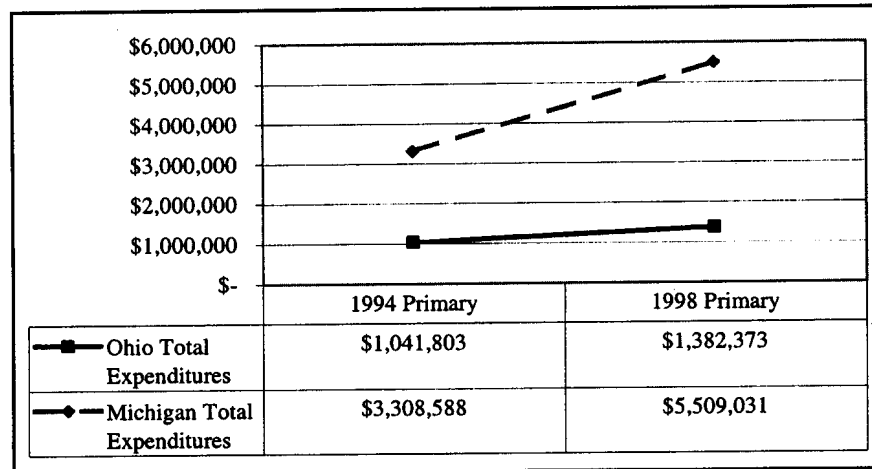


Figure 1. Comparison of primary expenditures in Michigan and Ohio

Elections and the Ohio Bureau of Elections for 1994 and 1998.¹⁰ All figures are adjusted to 1998 dollars. Figure 1 compares 1994 and 1998 primary election expenditures in Ohio and Michigan.

As Figure 1 indicates, primary costs in Ohio rise from \$1.04 million in 1994 to \$1.38 million in 1998, an increase of 32.6 percent. Primary campaign expenditures in Michigan increase from \$3.3 million in 1994 to \$5.5 million in 1998, a difference of more than \$2 million or an increase of 64.1 percent.¹¹ The increase for Ohio is consistent with previous research (see Moncrief, 1998 and Cook, 1994); however, the increase seen in Michigan provides support for our prediction that term limits are an intervening variable associated with a significant, if not dramatic, increase in campaign costs.

Thus far we have examined total primary expenditures in Michigan and Ohio. We now turn our attention to average party campaign expenditures at the district level. With such information, analyses more explicitly discern the impact of term limits on candidates' willingness and ability to afford running in a campaign. We divide the Michigan and Ohio data by party and open versus incumbent races. The analyses find statistical significance in the Michigan data but not for the Ohio data. To best summarize the analyses, Table 3 provides the average expenditures per district¹² for open and incumbent primary races in 1994 and 1998 for each party for Michigan only. Again, our hypothesis is that more competitive open primary elections are associated with an increase in average total party expenditures per district.

The Michigan results indicate that average primary expenditures are significantly different in terms of pre- and post-term limit implementation

Table 3. Average party expenditures per district

	1994		1998		% Change
	<i>Average expenditure</i>	(N)	<i>Average expenditure</i>	(N)	
MICHIGAN					
Republican					
Open race	\$19,536	(19)	\$42,874	(62)	+119.46
Incumbent	\$10,360	(90)	\$15,356	(47)	+48.22
Democrat					
Open race	\$23,567	(19)	\$23,002	(62)	-2.39
Incumbent	\$12,982	(91)	\$14,558	(48)	+12.14

Significance level for Michigan model: $F(3,216) = 20.01, p < 0.01$.

and between open and incumbent races.¹³ These findings are consistent with the results reported earlier on electoral competition at the district level. The most significant and dramatic increase in expenditures (119.4 percent) occurs post-term limits in open Republican races. Among Democrats, campaign expenditures in open races remain stable, with only a modest decrease of 2.3 percent between 1994 and 1998. When we compare Democratic and Republican primary expenditures in open races, we find that while Republican campaign expenditures were typically over \$4,000 less (or 17.1 percent less) than campaign expenditures for Democrats pre-term limits, they grew to nearly \$20,000 more (or 86.3 percent more) than Democrats post-term limits.

Republican races with an incumbent present typically experience an increase in campaign expenditures of 48.2 percent, or more than \$5,000. Democratic expenditures in races with an incumbent increase by 12.1 percent, or just over \$1,500. As the data indicate, even races with incumbent candidates experience substantial increases in terms of campaign expenditures post-term limits.

Discussion

We have focused on intra-party legislative contests at the district level, comparing pre-reform and post-reform term limit periods. In particular, we pose the critical question of whether the implementation of term limit reforms has had any systematic effect on candidates' willingness and ability to compete in primary elections. Using indicators of electoral competition and campaign expenditures in intra-party legislative contests, we analyse the 1994 and 1998 Republican Party and Democratic Party primary elections in Michigan and Ohio. The former state has implemented term limits and experienced mandatory retirement of state legislators while the

latter state has yet to implement term limits and therefore has not forced retirement on state legislatures.

The data do not support the conventional view that limiting terms of service for legislators increases electoral competition, and thus, the cost of running a campaign, by increasing the pool of candidates who run for office. The situation is indeed quite the opposite, with implementation of term limits reducing the level of electoral competition overall in intra-party contests, while increasing average party campaign expenditures per candidate. Although electoral competition is attenuated for both political parties, intra-party competition in Democratic primaries declines more precipitously than in Republican primaries after the implementation of term limits. This finding is interesting and stimulates thinking about the differential effects of term limits across political parties.

One theoretical explanation for these reported findings springs from Fiorina's (1996) notion (and others) about the differential costs of seeking office and how they favor Republicans and disadvantage Democrats, a point we noted earlier when discussing attacks on term limit reforms. Term limits may alter incentive structures that candidates operate under and the motivations and aspirations that guide their behavior. Thus, Fiorina argues that Democrats are more likely to place less value on a legislative seat in a post-term limits environment than are their Republican counterparts. The reason for this situation is straightforward, particularly given our finding that campaign expenditures post-term limits increase. Shorter terms of legislative service advantage Republican candidates who traditionally have greater financial and career flexibility than their Democratic counterparts. Given that the pool of Democratic candidates is typically more likely to come from salaried employees (e.g., teachers and other public employees) than are the pool of Republican candidates, Fiorina argues that Democrats are less likely to give up job security than Republican candidates in order to serve for only six or eight years in the state legislature.

While Fiorina's work leads us to expect differential effects of term limits across political parties, there is at least one alternative theoretical explanation for such findings. A plausible alternative explanation springs from potential differences in party organizations between Michigan and Ohio, especially as the party leaders contemplate the effect of term limits on their respective party's situation. From this perspective, different modes of recruiting candidates and party organizational strength in the two states might explain the findings reported. This explanation may be intuitively appealing but there is little evidence that it is a valid argument. In reviewing the party organizations of the two states, we find no noteworthy differences (i.e. in local party organizational strength or informal endorsement procedures) (Jewell and Olson, 1988).

Of course, this study cannot pretend to know why term limits have a differential impact across political parties. It does, however, enable us to broaden our understanding of the effects of term limits on intra-party electoral

competition and campaign expenditures. Our study discerns more explicitly the impact of limiting terms of legislative service on intra-party contests, and, perhaps more importantly, the unintended consequences of electoral reform. The future naturally remains cloudy, but the trends reported in this study suggest that attenuated electoral competition may in the final analysis turn out to be the opposite of what advocates of term limits had hoped for in gaining their passage.

To be sure, one ought to be cautious when generalizing beyond the limits of the data and the summary statistics reported. Findings are derived from the analyses of two states; nonetheless, it seems clear that the implementation of term limits in Michigan did have a systematic impact on intra-party electoral competition and campaign expenditures. In future research we expect to move beyond speculation to see just what types of candidates in each party seek the nomination and what the policy consequences are of moving into an era of term-limited state legislatures.

Appendix 1. Term limited states by year enacted and year of impact

State	Year enacted	House		Senate		% Voted yes
		Limit	Year of impact	Limit	Year of impact	
Maine	1993	8	1996	8	1996	67.6
California	1990	6	1996	8	1998	52.2
Colorado	1990	8	1998	8	1998	71
Arkansas	1992	6	1998	8	2000	59.9
Michigan	1992	6	1998	8	2002	58.8
Oregon	1992	6	1998	8	2002	69.6
Florida	1992	8	2000	8	2000	76.8
*Missouri	1992	8	2002	8	2002	75
Ohio	1992	8	2000	8	2000	68.4
South Dakota	1992	8	2000	8	2000	63.5
Montana	1992	8	2000	8	2000	67
Arizona	1992	8	2000	8	2000	74.2
Idaho	1994	8	2004	8	2004	59.4
Oklahoma	1990	12	2004	12	2004	67.3
Nevada	1996	12	2008	12	2008	70.4
Utah	1994	12	2006	12	2006	leg. passed
Wyoming	1992	12	2006	12	2006	77.2
Louisiana	1995	12	2007	12	2007	76

*Because of special elections, term limits will be effective in 2001 for 5 current members of the House and one Senator in 1998.

Source: National Conference of State Legislatures.

Notes

- 1 Defined as 'the provision of goods and services that exclusively benefit a specific set of recipients, even when the collective costs of providing the goods and services outweigh the collective benefit' (Carey, 1996: 103).
- 2 See Appendix 1 for a list of which states have adopted term limits and their year of impact.
- 3 California is considered the ultimate in professionalized legislatures, as evidenced in legislative salaries, staff size, district population and state budget. Additionally, California's average expenditures per candidate in contested House races in 1994 were three times higher than those of Illinois, which had the second highest average expenditures (Thompson and Moncrief, 1998). It is interesting to note that with all the housing and travel allowances, per diem payments and the like, California members of the State Assembly can make more (up to \$140,000) per year than the \$136,700 salary for Federal legislators (<http://www.tedcosta.com/legislativesalaries.htm>).
- 4 The criteria used to classify professionalism include 'the five S's' (Rosenthal, 1998) as features of legislative capacity. They include space (i.e. facilities and technical feasibility) length of session, structure (i.e. size and division of labor), staffing and salaries. Of all of the states to be impacted by term limits, only three meet the qualifications for being classified as a professionalized legislature: California, Michigan and Ohio.
- 5 To provide a combined test for the independence of groups (pre- versus post-term limit groups, and incumbent versus open primary elections), an analysis of variance (ANOVA) was calculated. We would expect the ANOVA to produce a significant value of *F* if the mean numbers of candidates in each of the different primary groups are not all equal. As the results posted below the table indicate, they differ significantly for both Republicans and Democrats.
- 6 Holbrook and Van Dunk (1993) assess general election competition and then compare the aggregated level of each state to the other states. In order to average the districts' measures of competition across the entire state they utilized the following competition index (CI):

$$CI = 100 - ((\text{average percent vote for winners} + \text{average margin of victory} + \text{percent uncontested seats} + \text{percent of safe seats})/4).$$
 However, unlike Holbrook and Van Dunk, we do not compare different states; instead, we focus on the competition within Michigan and Ohio. Therefore, we are primarily concerned with the change within districts and, accordingly, we modified this formula to assess individual districts rather than the entire pool of districts (further discussion to follow on modifications).
- 7 See Holbrook and Van Dunk (1993) for further discussion of the traditional measures of electoral competition and their weaknesses.
- 8 An ANOVA test is calculated to examine more closely differences between the VCI scores of the different groups separately for Republicans and Democrats. We would expect the ANOVA to produce a significant value of *F* if the average VCI scores in each of the different primary groups are not all equal. As the results posted below Table 2 indicate, there are significant differences for both party models.

- 9 It is important to note that while the mean values suggest differences in competition scores due to the main effects of party and year, and the interaction or simple effects, the variances in the different components adulterate the probability of statistical significance between the means. In some cases, the standard deviation is more than triple the mean value.
- 10 An adjustment of 14.4 percent was made to the 1994 dollar to adjust the value to 1998 dollars according to the CPI.
- 11 It is interesting to note that the increase in Michigan primary elections alone from 1994 to 1998 is more than the total amount spent on financing Ohio's primary in 1998.
- 12 All figures are presented as 1998 dollars. See note 10 above.
- 13 To provide a combined test for the independence of groups (pre- versus post-term limit groups, and incumbent versus open primary elections), an ANOVA is calculated to test for significant differences in the average expenditures. We would expect the ANOVA to produce a significant value of *F* if the mean campaign expenditures in each of the different primary groups were not all equal. As the results posted below the table indicate, they are equal for both Republicans and Democrats.

References

- Barcellona, Miriam M. and Andrew P. Grose (1994) *Term Limits: A Political Dilemma*. San Francisco, CA: Council of State Governments. CSG, C099-9400.
- Berelson, Bernard R., Paul F. Lazarsfeld and William N. McPhee (1954) *Voting*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Bibby, John (1983) 'Patterns in Midterm Gubernatorial and State Legislative Elections', *Public Opinion* February/March: 41-46.
- Breaux, David and Anthony Gierzynski (1991) 'It's Money That Matters: Campaign Expenditures and State Legislative Primaries', *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 16: 429-43.
- Breaux, David and Malcolm Jewell (1992) 'Winning Big: The Incumbency Advantage in State Legislative Races', in Gary F. Moncrief and Joel A. Thompson (eds) *Changing Patterns in State Legislative Careers*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.
- Campbell, James (1986) 'Presidential Coattails and Midterm Losses in State Legislative Elections', *American Political Science Review* 80: 45-64.
- Caress, Stanley M. (1996) 'The Impact of Term Limits on Legislative Behavior: An Examination of a Transitional Legislature', *PS: Political Science and Politics* 671-6.
- Carey, John M. (1996) *Term Limits and Legislative Representation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Carey, John M., Richard G. Niemi and Lynda W. Powell (1998) 'The Effects of Term Limits on the Broader Electoral Arena'. Paper presented at the American Political Science Association Annual Meeting, Boston, MA, 2-6 September.
- Carey, John M., Richard G. Niemi and Lynda W. Powell (2000) *Term Limits in the State Legislatures*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.
- Chubb, John (1988) 'Institutions, the Economy, and the Dynamics of State Elections', *American Political Science Review* 28: 133-45.

- Cook, Corey (1994) *Campaign Finance Reform*. Sacramento, CA: California Research Bureau, California State Library, 25.
- Ehrenhalt, Alan (1991) *The United States of Ambition: Politicians, Power and the Pursuit of Office*. New York: Times Books.
- Finer, Samuel E. (1975) *Adversary Politics and Electoral Reform*. London: Anthony Wigram.
- Fiorina, Morris (1996) *Divided Government*, 2nd edn. London: Allyn and Bacon.
- Fowler, Linda (1992) 'A Comment on Competition and Careers', in Gerald Benjamin and Michael J. Malbin (eds) *Limiting Legislative Terms*. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.
- Fund, John (1991) 'Term Limitation: An Idea Whose Time has Come', *Policy Analysis No. 141*. Cato Institute, Washington, D.C., and in Gerald Benjamin and Michael J. Malbin (eds) *Limiting Legislative Terms*. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.
- Garand, James C. (1991) 'Electoral Marginality in State Legislative Elections, 1968-1986', *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 16: 7-28.
- Grau, Craig H. (1981) 'Competition in State Legislative Primaries', *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 6: 35-54.
- Gray, V. (1976) 'A Note on Competition and Turnout in the American States', *Journal of Politics* 38: 153-8.
- Herrnson, Paul S. (1995) *Congressional Elections: Campaigning at Home and in Washington*. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.
- Hogan, Robert E. and Keith E. Hamm (1998) 'Variations in District-Level Campaign Spending in State Legislatures', in Joel A. Thompson and Gary F. Moncrief (eds) *Campaign Finance in State Legislative Elections*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.
- Holbrook-Provow, Thomas (1987) 'National Factors In Gubernatorial Elections', *American Politics Quarterly* 15: 471-83.
- Holbrook, Thomas M. and Emily Van Dunk (1993) 'Electoral Competition in the American States', *American Political Science Review* 87: 955-62.
- Jacobson, Gary C. (1997) *The Politics of Congressional Elections*, 4th edn. New York: Addison-Wesley.
- Jewell, Malcolm E. and David Breaux (1988) 'The Effect of Incumbency on State Legislative Elections', *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 13: 495-514.
- Jewell, Malcolm E. and David M. Olson (1988) *Political Parties and Elections in American States*, 3rd edn. Chicago, IL: Dorsey.
- Jewell, Malcolm E. and Samuel C. Patterson (1986) *The Legislative Process in the United States*. New York: Random House.
- Katz, Richard S. (1994) 'Electoral Policy', in Stuart S. Nagel (ed.) *Encyclopedia of Policy Studies*, 2nd edn. New York: Marcel Dekker.
- Kazee, Thomas A. (ed.) (1994) *Who Runs for Congress?* Washington D.C.: Congressional Quarterly.
- Keefe, William J. and Morris S. Ogul (1985) *The American Legislative Process*. Princeton, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Key, Valdimer O. (1942) *Politics, Parties and Pressure Groups*. New York: Thomas Crowell Company.
- Key, Valdimer O. (1956) *American State Politics: An Introduction*. New York: Knopf.
- Kermit, Daniel and John R. Lott, Jr. (1997) 'Term Limits and Electoral Competitiveness: Evidence from California's State Legislative Races', *Public Choice* 90: 165-84.

- Mitchell, Cleta Deatherage (1991) 'Term Limits? Yes!', *Extensions*. Norman, OK: Carl Albert Research Center. Spring.
- Moncrief, Gary F. (1998) 'Candidate Spending in State Legislative Races', in Joel A. Thompson and Gary F. Moncrief (eds) *Campaign Finance in State Legislative Elections*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.
- Morehouse, Sara M. (1981) *State Politics, Parties and Policy*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
- Petracca, Mark (1991) 'The Poison of Professional Politics', *Cato Institute Policy Analysis*, No. 151.
- Rosenthal, Alan (1998) *The Decline of Representative Democracy: Process, Participation and Power in State Legislatures*, Washington D.C.: CQ Press.
- Thompson, Joel A. and Gary F. Moncrief (1998) *Campaign Finance in State Legislative Elections*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

NEIL PINNEY¹ is an associate professor of political science at Western Michigan University. His research and teaching interests focus on legislative politics and public policy. He is a former American Political Science Association Congressional Fellow and has published articles in political science journals, including *American Journal of Political Science*, *Political Research Quarterly*, *Party Politics*, *Journal of Legislative Studies*, *Congress and the Presidency*, and *Political Behavior*.

ADDRESS: Department of Political Science, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, Michigan 49008-5012, USA. [email: neil.pinney@wmich.edu]

GEORGE SERRA is a professor of political science and director of the Center for Legislative Studies at Bridgewater State College. His research and teaching interests focus on legislative and electoral behavior, congressional representation of minority interests, presidency and executive politics, and policy implementation. He is a 2003-04 American Political Science Association Congressional Fellow and has published articles in leading political science journals, including the *Journal of Politics*, *Political Research Quarterly*, *American Politics Research*, and *Legislative Studies Quarterly*.

ADDRESS: Political Science Department, Bridgewater State College, 180 Summer Street, Bridgewater, MA 02325, USA. [email: gserra@bridgew.edu]

DALENE SPRICK is a doctoral candidate at Western Michigan University. Her research and teaching interests include state and local politics, legislative studies, and public policy. Ms. Sprick has also served as a research consultant for the Michigan Municipal League and is currently a senior governmental consultant at Rehmann Robson.

ADDRESS: Department of Political Science, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, Michigan 49008-5012, USA. [email: DSprick@Rehmann.com]

Paper submitted 12 June 2001; accepted for publication 14 March 2003.

¹ Authors are listed in alphabetical order.