



# Zay hates politics

by Zay Yontz



I hate lack of term limits.

As jokes about President Joseph Biden's age continue to permeate various social media platforms, Biden took to his recent Thanksgiving speech to combat these comments.

Biden chose to make light of his age — being the first president to be in their 80s — instead of defending his alleged inability to ride a bike which caused uproar, according to Spectrum News. These humorous expressions, like when he stated he's "been around for a while," have increasingly fueled the debate about the age of U.S. politicians. The age requirement is 35 years old for the presidency, 30 to run for the Senate and 25 to run for the House of Representatives. These numbers only set the minimum for a politician's age; there are no maximum limits on age for politicians. Alongside the lack of age limits, the Constitution sets no maximum term limits for any part of government besides the executive branch. This is where the main problem arises. The lack of term limits contributes to the increasing age of politicians currently in office.

49% of Americans said that it was best

for presidents to be in their 50s, according to Pew Research Center, but this is not inherently the problem in political operations. The main concern is term limits, which consequently align with the age of many politicians filling seats in the status quo. The federal government only places term limits on the executive branch, which has allowed senators like Mitch McConnell to serve as the senator of Kentucky since 1985. The main speculation behind his success is the tendency of voters to elect someone they know has previously served. While elected officials are technically supposed to represent the people who elected them, there are often ulterior motives for holding political office according to The Atlantic. McConnell continues to win despite public backlash. By adding term limits to these positions, McConnell and other politicians' extended time in office would be better addressed without directly faulting them for their age.

Aside from term limits, there is an interesting correlation between the age of the voters and the politicians elected; older countries generally elect older politicians, according to The Atlantic. This trend of a high concentration of elderly people is not isolated to politics but is seen across

business and finance, creating a trade-off in representation for younger generations. Despite Generation Z being known to vote for people who represent more progressive ideals, they are often limited to voting for elderly candidates, such as self-proclaimed socialist Bernie Sanders in 2020 or former president Donald Trump and Biden in the coming presidential election. Due to a lack of younger, prominent candidates, more detached politicians are the only options they feel like they can choose to vote for. Older generations tend to run more because that's where power generally concentrates historically in America.

While age is not a dissenting factor in choosing who should be eligible to run for different political positions, it is important to recognize it as a pattern that continues to increase. Even if changing the term limits doesn't directly address the age of politicians, it does more to ensure that representation is confined to one age group. The same group of older generations cannot consistently represent everyone fairly when the median age of the country is significantly lower than their ages. These lack of term limits prevent appropriate representation in a country that prides itself on being representative.

118th Congress

65.3 years

Median Age of the Senate

117/434

60-69 years old in the House

66%

Boomers (1946-1964) in the Senate

Source: Pew Research Center