

Proposition 93
Limits on Legislators' Terms in Office.
Initiative Constitutional Amendment.

Background

The state's voters passed Proposition 140 at the November 1990 election. As well as other changes, Proposition 140 changed the State Constitution to create term limits for the Legislature—Members of the Assembly and Senate. Term limits restrict the number of years that individuals can serve in the Legislature. Currently, an individual generally cannot serve a total of more than 14 years in the Legislature. (An exception is when an individual serves additional time by finishing out less than one-half of another person's term.) An individual's service is restricted to six years in the Assembly (three two-year terms) and eight years in the Senate (two four-year terms).

Proposal

Time Limits Without Regard to Legislative House. Under this measure, an individual could serve a total of 12 years in the Legislature (compared to 14 years currently). Unlike the current system, these years could be served without regard to whether they were in the Assembly or Senate. In other words, an individual could serve six two-year terms in the Assembly, three four-year terms in the Senate, or some combination of terms in both houses. (As under current law, an individual could serve additional time by finishing out less than one-half of another person's term.)

Current Members of the Legislature. Under this measure, existing Members of the Legislature could serve up to a total of 12 years in their current legislative house (regardless of how many years were already served in the other house). This could result in some current Members serving longer than 14 years in the Legislature.

Fiscal Effects

By altering term limits for Members of the Legislature, the measure would likely change which individuals are serving in the Legislature at any time. This would not have any direct fiscal effect on total state spending or revenues. The different composition of the Legislature, however, would likely lead to different decisions being made—for example on legislation and the state budget—than would otherwise be the case. These decisions could have an effect on state spending and revenues. Any such indirect impacts, however, are unknown and impossible to estimate.