

RESPONSES to TERM LIMITS

From: Joint Project Six State Studies

November 14, 2006

Responses	Study Findings	Supporting Statements
Turnover: Dealing with the lack of experience	Improve new member orientation	Expand traditional orientation to include policy issues and budget process;
	Institute on-going training for members	To assist in assimilating the mountains of information, mini ‘refresher’ course should be taught; should be conducted during session to render the information relevant and timely;
	Offer mentoring programs	Assign a veteran member to officially be a mentor under a structured program, instructing on traditions, decorum, rules, procedures, the culture, and policy areas OR assign a senior-level staff person to be member’s ‘buddy,’ a direct source of information, or both;
	Compile directories of rules	Such directories may condense the

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Legislature's Structure Leaders	<p data-bbox="583 256 848 302">and traditions</p> <p data-bbox="583 586 1171 686">Develop Leadership ladders & patterns of transition</p> <p data-bbox="583 971 1171 1068">Select leaders in term prior to their final one.</p> <p data-bbox="583 1247 1171 1455">New role for leaders: educators and chief campaigners Prepare prospective Leaders</p>	<p data-bbox="1205 256 1927 412">process of building experience, maturity, institutional knowledge and respect for the institution.</p> <p data-bbox="1205 586 1927 959">AR & FL model of choosing Speaker “designates” & CA choosing Speaker in bi-year this provides stability for the House, because all know who will be the future leaders, thus allowing the “designates” to acquire skills early, not “on the job.”</p> <p data-bbox="1205 971 1927 1182">CA model of electing Speaker 1 year before term change, allowing service to begin and arguably increase the impetus to reelect at the term change;</p> <p data-bbox="1205 1247 1927 1455">Leader’s responsibility to insure new members understand the process and what is actually taking place; Once a Speaker “designate” is</p>

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	Quickly build relationships with members by holding regular meetings with new members	selected, send them to training [Speaker's School]; Members will follow those they trust and sharing information is a way to build trust, so spend time with new members, spend effort educating them and getting to know them; Such meetings keep the leader informed and make members feel part of a team and of the process.
	Hold regular leadership team meetings	
Committees	Provide training and support for committee chairs.	Hold regular meetings with chairs where information and strategy is discussed and shared; A source for the history of a committee's past efforts are its staff and records, the more accessible, the better the source.
	Improve committee record keeping.	
	Carefully utilize member's professional and educational expertise when appointing	This will bring awareness of issues to the meetings and lessen the learning curve; also, strive to maintain

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	<p>committees</p> <p>Treat Vice Chair position as Chair-in-Training. Avoid appointing freshmen as chairs.</p> <p>Reduce the number of standing committees Goal for ALL: provide experienced and knowledgeable committee chairs</p>	<p>members on committees from one term to the next.</p> <p>Another manner to increase learning and shorten the OJT. Ideally, chairs should have some prior exposure to the process and the issues, which freshman do not;</p> <p>This becomes critical when a caucus, or party or coalition in control, has too few experienced members to chair all committees.</p>
Staff	<p>Increase staff training</p> <p>Retain effective staff</p>	<p>By insuring a well trained and informed and knowledgeable staff member reliance on lobbyist will diminish;</p> <p>Retains a core of knowledge available to leaders and members,</p>

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	Centralize partisan staff	thereby counter-balancing, somewhat, the effects of term limits; Since these staff members tend to be more directly aligned with a particular member, they tend to move on when members do so, so centralization, breaking this attachment, will help retain talented motivated and beneficial staff;
	Clearly define roles of partisan & non-partisan staff	Term-limited legislature needs to find an equilibrium with “enough nonpartisans to keep things running and keep members and the institution out of trouble, and enough partisan staff to help members make the tough choices without becoming dependent on outside sources. Term-limited state legislatures will need both kinds of staff to operate effectively and efficiently;”
	Cultivate relationships	It is important that nonpartisan staff

Responses	Study Findings	Supporting Statements
	between staff & members	find a way to market their services to new members and build trusting relationships early in legislators' careers
Collegiality	Offer opportunities for members to build rapport, including cross-party social interaction	Solid relationships of trust and respect are essential to the legislative process; Mutual respect and civility not only among freshmen members and experienced lawmakers, but also between Democrats and Republicans, are critical to the legislative process.
Balance of Power	Offer training on key policy areas. Offer training on the budget process. Improve legislative oversight efforts.	

Responses	Study Findings	Supporting Statements
	<p>Train new legislators on separation of powers; Train new legislators on institutional maintenance.</p> <p>Increase attention to institutional maintenance by leadership</p> <p>Consolidate budget bargaining power in leadership</p>	
Lobbyists	<p>Provide more informational resources to new members to reduce their reliance on lobbyists</p> <p>Educate new members on role of lobbyists</p>	<p>Ease new member reliance on lobbyist, which should result in members receiving less biased information</p> <p>Inviting a trusted, experienced, and thoughtful lobbyist to explain their views on the role of lobbying in the legislative process can give new</p>

Responses**Study Findings****Supporting Statements**

Develop a code of ethics for lobbyists

members a unique perspective.

These codes should assist in controlling behavior deemed improper.

RESPONSES/ADAPTATIONS to TERM LIMITS

November 14, 2006

Effects**Study Findings****Responses/Adaptations****Turn over**

Forces out long-serving members who provided cadre of experienced mentors and leaders

AZ, AR, CA, CO, FL, ME, NE, OH & OK enhanced orientation by lengthening & introducing new topics;
AZ & NE conduct follow-up in early session;
AR & CA created permanent records of knowledge, wisdom, practices;
CO created briefing books & white papers on issues;
ME considered creating written legislative history;

Effects	Study Findings	Responses/Adaptations
		CA, CO, ME, OH & OK used mentoring to soften learning curve
Careerism	Long serving members run for other elective positions	No response or adaptation
Structure	Changes here center on the lack of experience of persons elected	
Leaders	<p>No leader, post term limits, has served more than 4 years (2 terms), most limited to 1 term as leader.</p> <p>Decrease in legislative experience, a steep learning curve for a leader, and shortened tenure (lame duck status) weakens leaders.</p> <p>A prospective leader's ability to raise money for their caucus begins to influence the selection</p>	<p>AZ, CA, CO, FL & NE created or enhanced leadership training;</p> <p>AR, FL & OK elected/chose speaker-designate;</p> <p>CA elects Speaker in 2nd year of biennium (service overlaps an election);</p> <p>AR & OK increased leadership team;</p> <p>AR formalized party caucus leader posts;</p> <p>CO created leadership notebooks</p>

of leaders, because members can't look to experience or proven leadership within the body.

<p>Committees Dramatically increased turn over of Chairs, decreases level of experience & expertise. Often new chairs have no previous experience on a committee or even in the legislature: creates an especially steep learning curve for chairs and a greater reliance on 3rd parties as sources of critical information – staff, lobbyists, bureaucrats; leads to revisiting of issues session after session, term after term; debate in committees turns more personal, partisan & political; role as gate-keeper for the House diminishes; some</p>	<p>AZ decreased number of committees and provided committee issue briefings by recognized specialists and committee chair training; OK provides committee chair training; AR created 3 subcommittees per committee, thus increasing # of Chairs; FL created training dvd's for Chairs; CO allows in-session substitution of committee members (as we do in interim) OK chooses chairs on ability rejecting prior seniority pattern</p>
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decisions, which should be made by a committee, transferred to majority caucuses, or to Rules/Calendar committees, or to leadership.

Staff

Role of non-partisan staff enhanced due to increased dependence on them to educate and train new legislators on policy & process.

Partisan staff becomes more influential due to members' familiarity and comfort with the staffer's philosophy.

Turn over has increased; it has become more difficult to retain staff; increased pressure on non-partisan staff to be more partisan in their policy information & analysis.

Non-partisan staff is perceived as an arm of the majority party.

CA retained experienced staff, invested in non-partisan staff & prevented changes to committee staff in 1st year of term & increased staff training efforts;

CO involved all staff in orientation, designated staff as "buddy" (mentor) for new members, asked staff to create briefing books & white papers on issues;

OK has enhanced staff training;

NE considering making committee staff protected employees

Non-partisan staff is challenged to communicate their proper role in the process.

Collegiality

How legislators approach their jobs and interact with one another changes.

Term limited members have elevated urgency about their service and thus will sacrifice collegiality to accomplish their goals in their limited time. With less time to become friends and develop trust, members are less likely to bond, relationships are more confrontational, and the impetus to compromise decreases

AR Speaker hosts small group dinners with new members;
OH caucuses conduct orientation for new members;

Balance of Power

Influence of the Legislature declines under term limits; This decline is most visible in the budget process, thus

AR, AZ & OK increased inclusiveness on policy making & Budget committees;
CA increased training on Legislative

shifting the balance of power (control of the purse strings) toward the Executive [true in 5 of 6 states studied] shown by the level legislative of changes made to the Gov's proposed budget – a level which declines; This is fueled by inexperience, both in members and the leadership – they just don't know enough to make the changes

Quality of policy does not seem to change, however, the 'policy champions,' those expert members who have garnered expertise through years of service, disappear – insufficient time to develop

The study does not address intra-legislative power balances.

oversight function;

CO increased budget focus for orientation;

ME created a program evaluation office;

OK began appointing freshmen to Budget;

AR, FL & OK elect a Speaker-designate;

CA elects Speaker in 2nd year of biennium;

CA – members selected to serve on budget committees “shadowed” current members to learn;

CO, FL & ME placed more background information on line and made staff authors more available to members;

Lobbyists

Observers believe lobbyists gain influence mostly due to the inexperience of members and their need for quick information [this observation would apply to bureaucrats as well]; this information void is exacerbated by the absence of seasoned veterans and leaders on whom the members can depend; Lobbying becomes more difficult through high turn over and short service, so lobbyists have difficulty developing relations; Lobbyist behavior and ethics has fallen in some states and members seem to be more suspicious of lobbyists and their role in the process.

No responses or adaptations

Composition

Term limits were supposed to change the composition to reflect population of the state, *i.e.* more women and minorities to reflect population demographics
This effect had not been born out.

No responses or adaptations