A JOINT RESOLUTION

proposing a constitutional amendment on the length of legislative terms and limiting to three the number of terms for which a person may be elected or appointed to the legislature or certain state offices.

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Section 3, Article III, Texas Constitution, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 3. (a) The Senators shall be chosen by the qualified voters for the term of six [four] years[.]. The six year terms shall be staggered so that one third of the Senators are elected biennially.[but a new Senate shall be chosen after every apportionment, and the Senators elected after each apportionment shall be divided by lot into two classes. The seats of the Senators of the first class shall be vacated at the expiration of the first two years, and those of the second class at the expiration of four years, so that one half of the Senators shall be chosen biennially thereafter.]

(b) Senators shall take office following their election, on the day set by law for the convening of the Regular Session of the Legislature, and shall serve thereafter for the full term of years to which elected.

SECTION 2. Section 4, Article III, Texas Constitution, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 4. (a) The Members of the House of Representatives

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shall be chosen by the qualified voters for the term of four [two] years. The four year terms shall be staggered so that one half of the Representatives are elected biennially.

(b) Representatives shall take office following their election, on the day set by law for the convening of the Regular Session of the Legislature, and shall serve thereafter for the full term of years to which elected.

SECTION 3. Article III, Texas Constitution, is amended by adding Section 7a to read as follows:

Sec. 7a. (a) A person who has been elected to serve three terms in the senate is not eligible for election to serve a fourth term. This provision limits to three the number of consecutive or nonconsecutive terms for which a person may be elected to the senate. This provision does not prohibit a person from being eligible for election to an office not described by this subsection.

(b) A person who has been elected to serve three terms in the house of representatives is not eligible for election to serve a fourth term. This provision limits to three the number of consecutive or nonconsecutive terms for which a person may be elected to the house of representatives. This provision does not prohibit a person from being eligible for election to an office not described by this subsection.

(c) Legislative service before the legislature convenes in regular session in 2015 is not counted in determining whether a person is disqualified from election under this section.

(d) For purposes of this section, it is presumed that a
member of the legislature who seeks election to a subsequent term of
office will serve for the full term of office the member is
currently serving.

SECTION 4. Article IV, Texas Constitution, is amended by
adding Section 2a to read as follows:

Sec. 2a. (a) A person who has been elected or appointed to
serve three terms in an office listed in Section 1 of this article
is not eligible for election or appointment to serve a fourth term
in the same office. This provision limits to three the number of
consecutive or nonconsecutive terms for which a person may be
elected to an office listed in Section 1 of this article.

(b) A person described by subsection (a) of this section is
not prohibited from being eligible for election to a different
office listed in Section 1 of this article or an office listed in
Section 1 of Article 3 of the this constitution.

(c) The term of a person appointed to serve for the
remainder of a term to fill a vacancy in a statewide office is not
counted in determining whether a person is eligible to serve under
Subsection (a) of this section.

SECTION 5. The following temporary provision is added to
the Texas Constitution:

TEMPORARY PROVISION. (a) This temporary provision applies to
the constitutional amendment proposed by the 84th Legislature,
Regular Session, 2015, on the length of legislative terms and
limiting to three the number of terms for which a person may be
elected or appointed to the legislature or certain state offices.

(b) Members of the Senate shall be elected to terms as
provided by Section 3, Article III, of this constitution beginning with the election of members of the 85th Legislature, to convene in 2017. For that purpose, the senators elected to the 85th Legislature shall be divided by lot into three classes to establish staggered terms as provided by Sections 3, Article III. The seats of the Senators of the first class shall be vacated at the expiration of the first two years, those of the second class at the expiration of four years, and those of the third class at the expiration of six years. When the seats of the Senators of the first, second or third class are vacated, the Senators shall be chosen by the qualified voters for the term of six years so that one third of the Senators are elected biennially to six year terms.

(c) Members of the House of Representatives shall be elected to terms as provided by Section 4, Article III, of this constitution beginning with the election of members of the 85th Legislature, to convene in 2017. For that purpose, the Representatives elected to the 85th Legislature shall be divided by lot into two classes so that half of the Members shall be chosen biennially to four year terms as provided by Sections 3, Article III. The seats of the Representatives of the first class shall be vacated at the expiration of the first two years and those of the second class at the expiration of four years. When the seats of the Representatives of the first and second classes are vacated, the Representatives shall be chosen by the qualified voters for the term of four years so that half of the Representatives are elected biennially to four year terms.

(d) A term of office that begins before January 1, 2015, is
not counted in determining whether a person is eligible to serve under Section 7a, Article III, or Section 2a, Article IV, of this constitution.

(e) The terms of the Senators who are divided into the first or second classes described in Subsection (b) of this section are not counted in determining whether they are eligible to serve under Section 7a, Article III, of this constitution.

(f) The term of the Representatives who are divided into the first class described in Subsection (c) of this section is not counted in determining whether they are eligible to serve under Section 7a, Article III, of this constitution.

(g) This temporary provision expires February 1, 2023.

SECTION 6. This proposed constitutional amendment shall be submitted to the voters at an election to be held November 3, 2015. The ballot shall be printed to permit voting for or against the proposition: "The constitutional amendment changing the length of legislative terms and limiting to three the number of terms for which a person may be elected or appointed to the office of governor, lieutenant governor, secretary of state, comptroller of public accounts, commissioner of the General Land Office, attorney general, commissioner of agriculture, railroad commissioner, state senator, or state representative."