



***Becoming One Indivisible  
Nation In the Era of  
Divisiveness***

**Class 4**

**April 23 – May 28**

## Where We Ended Class 3

**Becoming One Indivisible Nation Means to Minimize Divisiveness and Restore Unity.**

**There are Five Key Areas We Need to Fix to Restore Unity and Effectiveness in Governing.**

1. **Reform Electoral Processes**
2. **Reduce Partisanship and Ineffective Governing**
3. **Strengthen Ethics**
4. **Limit Campaign Contributions and False Messages**
5. **Create National Service Requirement for Citizenship**

**Let's Look at the  
“Citizen Rules” To  
Reduce Partisanship and  
Ineffective Governing**

# The Rules to Reduce Partisanship and Ineffective Governing

- 1. Limit the Terms of Congress, Determining Pay and Benefits – Rule 1**
- 2. Reduce Majority Party Control – Rule 2**
- 3. Senate Confirmation Process, Presidential Appointments – Rule 3**
- 4. Strengthen Inspector General Oversight – Rule 4**
- 5. Financial Management: Budgeting, Taxes, Spending – Rule 5**
- 6. Constitutional Right of Privacy – Rule 17**

# Citizen Rule #1

## **1. Setting Term Limits, Compensation, Health and Retirement Benefits for Member of Congress and Senior Administration Officials.**

- Term limits are proposed to overcome the inherent role that running for re-election while serving plays in the divisiveness and dysfunction. This factor drives loyalty to the party, to the interests of the base voters, not the entire country, and to the interests of major donors.
- But how many terms would help overcome this factor?

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- **Purchase health care insurance in the same health care market as citizens.**

# Benefits of Rule #1

- **Removes Career Self Interest, enabling a focus on serving the country.**
- **Minimizes influences of party and major donors.**
- **Removes ability of governing elite to set their own salaries, benefits.**
- **Others**

# Problems of Rule #1

- **Loss of experience in legislative process.**
- **Limits choices of voters.**
- **Others**

# Let's Review the Rules To Reduce Partisanship and Ineffective Governing

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2. Reduce Majority Party Control – Rule 2
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# Citizen Rule #2

## **2. Defining New Rules for The Legislative Processes to Limit Partisanship; Confirming Primacy of Citizen Rules in Constitution over Procedural Rules Enacted by Members of Congress.**

- How might we define new rules for the Legislative processes? What parts of the current legislative process contribute to partisan competition and work against bi-partisan cooperation? Does extreme partisan competition and one party policies undermine unity among citizens?

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- **Single issue bills, no omnibus bills; each issue is a separate vote.**
- **Fiscal year budget bill including target revenue, spending and deficit levels, must be passed before passing individual spending and tax bills.**
- **Any bill with 10% co-sponsors must come to the floor in 20 session days; vote within 3-6 days.**
- **Minimum of 5% of majority votes in passing bills must be from minority party(s).**

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- **Since Citizen Rules would be in the Constitution, they would have priority.**



## Benefits of Rule #2

- Ensures more transparency, accountability.
- Ensures members have time to read bills before voting, removes ability to “pocket veto” bills.
- Minimizes the total control of the senior party leaders of the legislative process.
- Ensures no one party legislation would be passed.
- Others

## Problems of Rule #2

- The minority can block all actions of the majority.
- Others

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# Citizen Rules #3

## 3. Define Timing Requirements for Senate Votes on Treaties and Presidential Appointments; Limit the Duration of Acting Presidential Appointments; Limit Absolute Presidential Reprieves and Pardons.

➤ What does the Constitution say about the requirement for the Senate to provide “advice and consent” on Presidential Appointments?

➤ Article 2, Section 2

*“He (the President) shall have Power ... to make Treaties, provided two-thirds of the Senators present concur, and he shall nominate, and by and with the Consent of the Senate, shall appoint Ambassadors, other public Ministers and Consuls, Judges of the Supreme Court, and all other officers of the United States ...”*

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- **Presidential reprieves and pardons must be confirmed by Senate.**

## Benefits of Rule #3

- Ensures compliance with the current language of the Constitution (Article 2, Section 2).
- Prevents “going around the Senate” to make appointments.
- Minimizes potential corruption of the pardon power.
- Others

## Problems of Rule #3

- Others

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# Citizen Rule #4

## **4. Strengthening Congressional Oversight of Executive Implementation; Strengthening the Independence of Inspectors General and Key Executive Departments in the Administration.**

- Does the Executive Administration faithfully implement the laws enacted by Congress without fail? Who reviews the implementation of laws passed by Congress by the Executive branch, and the effective spending of public money?

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- Today, Inspectors General and the heads of Executive Departments serve at the pleasure of the President. They can be relieved from their positions for any reason. Does this give the President the sole authority to relieve positions confirmed by the Senate? Can this authority be abused to cover unethical actions by the President?

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- **Inspectors General and key Executive Department and Military leaders can be relieved only by confirmation of Congress, to preserve independence from unethical or corrupt actions.**

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- **Inspectors General and key Executive Dept and Military leaders can be relieved only by confirmation of Congress to preserve independence from political influence.**
- **These positions are:**
  - **Attorney General**
  - **Directors of FBI and CIA**
  - **US Attorneys**
  - **Directors of National Intelligence and National Security**
  - **Treasury and IRS Director**
  - **Joint Chiefs and Service Chiefs**



## Benefits of Rule #4

- Provides greater levels of independent accountability of Executive functions.
- Ensures corruption cannot influence replacement of key oversight and executive department leaders.
- Others

## Problems of Rule #4

- Could weaken the authority of the President.
- Others

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