



July 15, 2010

Mr. Bill McCollum  
PO Box 10829  
Tallahassee, FL 32302-2829

Dear Mr. McCollum:

I am sending the attached Opinion piece to every media outlet in Florida in order to set the record straight about your position(s) on term limits.

Even as taxpayers are struggling to survive one of the longest, deepest recessions in American history, government has continued to grow recklessly, and career politicians continue to spend the people's money to climb yet another rung on the political ladder.

As a professional politician with 33 years in elective office, your claim to support term limits is hollow at best. If anything, on the national level, you did more harm than good. In 1994, when the so-called "Republican Revolution" made term limits a priority at the national level, Speaker Newt Gingrich named you as the "point man" on term limits. Instead of supporting a true limit of six, you refused to consider anything but a 12-year "career" limit. Your combative style doomed the measure in the U.S. House.

This should not have been a surprise as you refused to support the "eight is enough" campaign that Florida voters resoundingly approved in 1992 to limit the terms of state lawmakers.

Now, you are back to the well again. Your 33 years in office have obviously taught you many tricks, and one of the oldest one's is to latch onto a popular issue like term limits and claim to be in favor of reform. Unfortunately, you have proven yourself over time to be nothing more than a Reformer In Name Only.

You had your chance to fight the establishment, but regrettably, instead you chose to join it.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Philip Blumel".

Philip Blumel  
President  
U.S. Term Limits

## McCOLLUM AND GINGRICH: “REFORMERS IN NAME ONLY”

By Philip Blumel

While taxpayers have struggled to survive one of the longest, deepest recessions in American history, government has continued to grow recklessly – by unsustainable leaps and bounds. It seems no matter which party is in charge (and no matter what promises they make on the campaign trail) nothing ever changes.

Part of the reason is that many of our self-styled reformers -- such as Gubernatorial candidate Bill McCollum -- are “reformers in name only,” career politicians who are just using an issue to advance his or her political interests.

A professional politician for the last 33 years (a span that covers 14 elections and 23 years spent in taxpayer-funded offices), McCollum claims to be an advocate for term limits – which Florida voters have enthusiastically embraced for both state and federal offices.

Unfortunately, this is one of many instances in which McCollum’s rhetoric does not match his record.

Not only did McCollum repeatedly fail to honor his own term limit position, he refused to support the “eight is enough” campaign that Florida voters resoundingly approved in 1992 to limit the terms of state lawmakers. Two years later, when the so-called “Republican Revolution” made term limits a priority at the national level, McCollum once again did more harm than good to the movement.

Instead of supporting a true limit of six, McCollum – who was designated by former Speaker Newt Gingrich as the “point man” on term limits – refused to consider anything but a 12-year “career” limit. His recalcitrance and combative style (he once physically shoved former U.S. Term Limits president Paul Jacob) doomed the measure in the U.S. House.

Interestingly, we now learn that Gingrich – who is traveling around the country in support of a second “Contract” – has endorsed McCollum’s gubernatorial bid. No surprise there, right? These “reformers in name only” are obviously up to their old tricks again. They used term limits and other popular issues to attract millions of voters during the 1994 election (only to abandon them), so it’s only fitting that they are attempting to go back to the well one more time.

Don’t be fooled. McCollum had his chance to fight the establishment, but he chose to join it instead.

In 1998, the *National Journal* called McCollum out as one of several Representatives who “long ago abandoned their own promises to limit their terms in office.”<sup>1</sup>

Florida papers also took note of his hypocrisy.

“U.S. Rep. Bill McCollum has been advocating 12-year term limits ever since he was elected 19 years ago,” the *St. Petersburg Times* noted in 1999.<sup>2</sup>

More than a decade later, nothing has changed except the political office that McCollum is seeking.

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<sup>1</sup> *National Journal's* House Race Hotline, “Term Limit Pledges Out The Door?” (11/13/98)

<sup>2</sup> Editorial, “Term Limit Pledges Turn Soft”, *St. Petersburg Times* (4/17/99)

So, what would a McCollum administration look like? Aside from rhetoric, is there anything to suggest that he would actually stand up for real reforms this go-round? According to a 2000 *St. Petersburg Times* editorial, McCollum was “conspicuously indulgent toward special interests” during his time in the U.S. Congress, which may have been one reason he was hired as a Washington, D.C. lobbyist in 2001 after Florida voters rejected his first U.S. Senate bid.

Sound like a “citizen leader” to you?

Nonetheless, Gingrich has called McCollum a “lifelong conservative” who “will fight for the principles of limited government, fiscal restraint and economic and personal freedom.”<sup>3</sup>

Fortunately, Floridians know that this race will not be about promises – particularly from politicians like Gingrich – it will be about McCollum’s “lifelong” record as a career politician who cannot be trusted to keep his word when it comes to advancing a true reform agenda. Sunshine State voters know that when it comes to achieving real change on behalf of taxpayers, “reformers in name only” need not apply.

*The author is president of U.S. Term Limits and a resident of Florida.*

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.sunshinestatenews.com/story/rumors-growing-he-plans-see-white-house-newt-gingrich-backs-bill-mccollum>, web-accessed (6/29/2010)