

How can we limit interest-group influence on legislatures?

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From Philip Bitar, *The Second American Revolution: We The People vs. The Special Interest Groups*

◆ Problem

- ◇ Interest-group influence on legislators allows minority interests to prevail over majority interests.
- ◇ Interest groups drive up the cost of government despite the desire of the populace as a whole to reduce spending, debt, and taxes.

◆ Analysis

◇ Problem – legislator votes are public

Legislator votes are public, allowing interest groups to hold legislators accountable for how they vote.

Interest groups hold legislators accountable for supporting favors to the groups, thereby driving up the cost of government.

◇ Solution – citizen votes are private

Citizen votes are private, preventing interest groups from holding citizens accountable for how they vote.

Citizens consistently approve initiatives for fiscal restraint in the liberal states of Washington and California.

◆ Solution

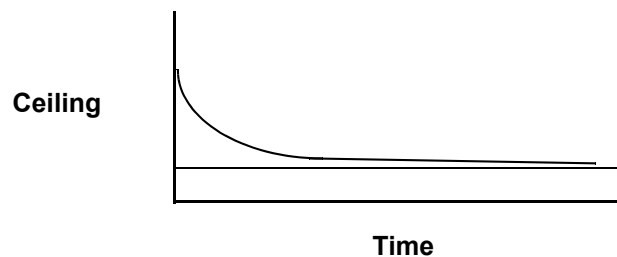
◇ Citizen-controlled budget ceiling

A citizen-controlled ceiling on government income+debt will make government fiscally responsible by solving the interest-group problem.

The ceiling is expressed as a fraction of the income of the economy (GDP), allowing government income+debt to grow as fast as the income of the economy grows.

$$\frac{\text{annual income} + \text{total debt}}{\text{constituent GDP}} < \text{Ceiling}$$

The citizens can change the ceiling through an initiative process, thereby allowing the citizens to drive the ceiling down to an asymptotic value over time. This is the best possible solution.



◆ Strategy

◇ Washington State

We start in Washington State through the initiative process. This will set the example for the other states.

◇ The other 23 initiative states

The other 23 states having an initiative process will follow suit, in particular, California.

◇ Federal government

This will build momentum for a federal constitutional amendment.