



## **Will a GOP House Restore Term Limits for Committee Chairs?**

By: Elizabeth Wynne Johnson

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WASHINGTON -- If the Republicans take control of the House, what will they decide do about the 3-term limits for committee chairs -- a legacy of Newt Gingrich that Democrats did away with in 2009? In a GOP-led House that restores the term limits, some veteran Republicans could find themselves term-limited out of key leadership roles on their committees, depending on how the leadership decides to count time-served as 'ranking members.' A Capitol News Connection report on WAMU, Washington, D.C.

Good morning, I'm Elizabeth Wynne Johnson; this is Power Breakfast from Capitol News Connection.

Nature abhors a vacuum and so does the 24-hour news cycle. Which is why a lack of any definitive answers about the future of Congress does not stop pundits from speculating about it. Today, in the interest of doing so productively at least, a primer on committee leadership; who gives it, who gets it, and why a lot depends on which Party is in control.

BEUTTLER: There's been some changes in the House rules...

Fred Beuttler is Deputy Historian of the House. For the purposes of today's primer, imagine for a moment that maybe -- just maybe -- control of the House is up for grabs.

BEUTTLER: The rules are set by the majority. And at the beginning of a Congress remember, the House is brand-new every two years.

If Republicans take control, they'll have to decide what to do about the 3-term limits for committee chairs. A legacy of Newt Gingrich that Democrats did away with in 2009.

BEUTTLER: It's unclear what will take place come January because a new rules package will be voted on. Depending on who's in the majority, probably a steering committee will be used to elect committee chairmen, but I'm not sure whether the three-term limit will still be in place or not.

Translation: in a GOP-led House, some veteran Republicans could find themselves term-limited out of key leadership roles on their committees... depending on how the leadership decides to count time-served as 'ranking members.' Bottom line, says Beuttler, the outcome of next Tuesday's midterm election will generate as many new questions as it answers.

BEUTTLER: It's an exciting time but one that's not very public and outside. People aren't

going to be seeing it because much of it is going to be in internal party conferences or caucuses.

In other words, the end of one loud campaign phase is the start of a new, quieter one as the battle for a new Congress' leadership positions gets underway.

That's Power Breakfast from Capitol News Connection.